

Wisconsin

PATHWAYS TO INDEPENDENCE

*Sharing the Journey:
Helping People with Developmental
Disabilities Find & Follow
The Career Path That's Right For Them*



A Career Planning Guide for Employment Specialists



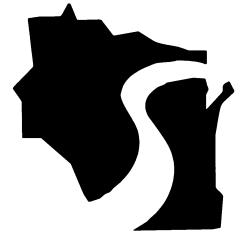
Pathways to Independence

Department of Health and Family Services

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Career Planning Guide For Employment Specialists

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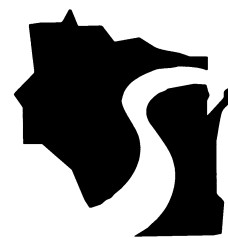


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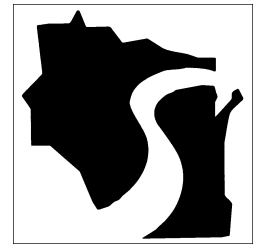
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INTRODUCTION

Pathways to Independence

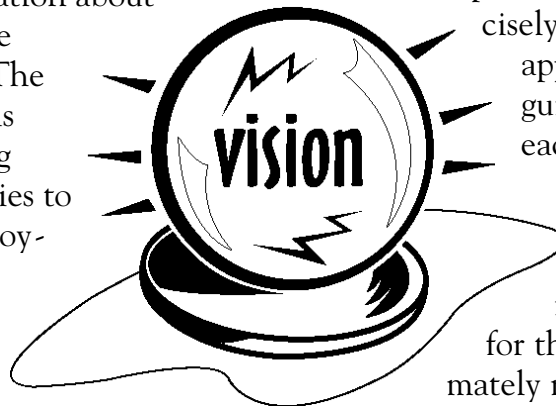
Pathways to Independence is an innovative and exciting demonstration project aimed at helping people with significant disabilities to find satisfying careers. Pathways helps people with disabilities overcome barriers and disincentives to full employment created by the complex system of benefits. Wisconsin Pathways to Independence offers specialized benefits consultants, vocational planning specialists, an individualized team of employment advisors, access to a full range of Division of Vocational Rehabilitation services, and information about improved health care insurance options. The vision for Pathways is focused upon helping people with disabilities to reach their full employment potential.

In this vision, the pathway that people are on is one that leads to more than simple job placement. It is one where the process of finding a career and job is empowering, individualized, capacity-oriented and creative. The process also includes dedicated time for career exploration activities, including meaningful work experiences, job shadowing, and other strategies that promote informed choice by consumers. In addition,

the Pathways path is one where the outcome includes both a successfully secured initial employment opportunity and a vision/plan for how this employment can ultimately lead to a satisfying career.

Creativity

Creativity is one of the primary keys to achieving this sort of process and outcome for the people with developmental disabilities with whom we work. Often, our creativity gets overwhelmed by the workloads and daily challenges that our jobs involve. Sometimes, guidance and encouragement to work in more creative ways are a welcome inspiration. This career planning guide is designed for precisely this reason. We hope the approach described in this guide will allow the creativity each of us has within us to become more central to the work we do, not only resulting in more satisfying employment outcomes for the people we serve, but ultimately resulting in more job satisfaction for ourselves! Let's face it, helping someone achieve a positive outcome can really boost our morale. The more we can do this, the more we enjoy our jobs. And the more we enjoy our jobs, the more we make a positive impact on the people we serve. It's one "vicious" circle that we would all like to be caught in!



Creativity involves a number of strategies that our work often makes it hard to focus upon:

- ◆ *Stretching our imaginations*
- ◆ *Keeping an open mind when evaluating new ideas*
- ◆ *Taking risks*
- ◆ *Trying new things*

When people lose touch with their creative side, they adopt a series of attitudes that keep it from reappearing:

- ◆ *It's not important*
- ◆ *I don't have time*
- ◆ *I already know the right answer*
- ◆ *I'm not a creative sort of person*

For career planning to work, it must be seen as an important process that we are willing to make time for and in which we participate without assuming we already know the direction that the people with developmental disabilities with whom we work should go. The rise of self-determination challenges us to re-conceptualize our role as expert and to give up the "I already know the right answer for this person" mentality. **Instead of acting as experts in deciding for people what their goals should be, our expertise now lies in helping people achieve the goals they set for themselves.**

To become this sort of expert, we must develop strategies and skills to:

- ◆ *Assist people to explore and understand their options, make choices and identify their own goals*
- ◆ *Find or create opportunities that help people achieve the goals they've set for themselves*

- ◆ *Identify and develop creative ways to provide the support people need to achieve their goals.*

This career planning process is designed to replace, not supplement, existing service planning processes you undertake with consumers. Therefore, it does not require significant amounts of additional time on

your part to utilize.

In addition, this career planning process is designed to foster self-determination by suggesting a variety of strategies that can enable people to set and achieve their own career goals, with

you and others offering assistance and support.

Wisconsin has an impressive track record of developing good quality community-based services, which offer people with developmental disabilities choice, independence and opportunities to contribute as valued citizens in our communities.

We are now at a point of focusing even more closely on supporting self-determination. We hope this planning process will complement the already impressive supported employment services that exist here in Wisconsin, and will contribute to the creation of truly satisfying careers for people with developmental disabilities.

Key Principles

This Career Planning Process is Based Upon the Following:

The national Association for Persons in Supported Employment (APSE) has developed ethical guidelines for professionals in supported employment. These guidelines set out a vision for what supported employment should be. This vision includes the following principles:

- ◆ *The individual receiving supports acting as the central driving force in the development of options and decisions*
- ◆ *A focus on capacities, gifts, personal interests, skills, aptitudes and life goals, rather than limitations, which can exclude people from possibilities*
- ◆ *An assumption that individuals are the best sources of information about themselves, and others (at each individual's invitation) who are good sources of information are family members, friends, or co-workers*
- ◆ *Sufficient options being made available to ensure choice is possible*
- ◆ *Access to direct personal experience and/or information on potential alternatives which ensures informed choice is possible*
- ◆ *Jobs being individually arranged to match a person's interests, skills, preferences, aptitudes, and life goals.*

All of these principles are important foundations on which our work with people who have developmental disabilities can be based. We have used these principles in developing this career planning

process. Our approach to career planning therefore includes wider strategies we need to pursue to make Pathways effective. These include:

- ◆ *Developing basic career exploration tools and resources that are accessible and do not unnecessarily limit choices.*
- ◆ *Developing a network of employers willing to offer job shadowing, work experience opportunities, and existing employees who can talk to with people about what it's like to have a particular job.*
- ◆ *Developing a network of supported employment consumers, so that we can connect people looking for certain types of jobs or careers with those already doing it.*
- ◆ *Developing a network of resource people who have expertise on self-employment and small business development to expand employment options.*



In addition to the ethical guidelines described above, APSE has also set practical standards toward which those working in employment services for people with developmental disabilities should strive. At a fundamental level, these standards include an end to segregated employment. But beyond simply advocating integrated employment, APSE has laid out an important standard for how these opportunities should be provided. It states:

The promotion of greater informed choice regarding integrated employment opportunities, career development, and options for support that include community employment experiences matched to interests and skills, is critical.^{iv}

This single sentence challenges us in a number of ways. It calls for:

- ◆ *Informed choice rather than professionally-controlled decision-making.*
- ◆ *Career development rather than job placement.*
- ◆ *Career & employment opportunities that match an individual's interests and skills, instead of opportunities that are simply immediately or easily arranged.*

We believe the best way to transition to this more empowering, holistic and individualized way of providing integrated employment services is to re-conceptualize the planning, information-gathering, and assessment processes traditionally used. Having said this, it is important to recognize that focusing on this sort of change can have potential drawbacks that we must be careful to avoid.

The Pitfalls of Innovative Career Planning Processes

Three major pitfalls can result when new and innovative ways of planning with people who have developmental disabilities are tried. It makes sense to mention these now, so that you are aware of these pitfalls and can recognize them in order to effectively avoid them.

1 The plan becomes an end rather than a means.

This usually happens when people become mesmerized by the planning process itself. They put much energy into doing the planning well, but then the plan created is not acted on. We've seen beautiful, colorful plans and wonderful planning meetings that have nonetheless led to little positive change, primarily because people viewed the plan as an outcome. We should not offer people a

hopeful planning process that suggests real change is possible if there is no process or commitment to follow through on the plan developed. Think of the plan as your starting point, or the map you make to the real goal, and you'll be on the right track.

2 We insist people use the planning process exactly as it is presented.

Every planning process describes in detail how to use it. That is part of helping people understand how the process can work. People describe their processes in detail to ensure its use will actually mean something different for people with disabilities. But sometimes, others interpret the details as prescription. They think the process must be used exactly as it is written, regardless of the unique person or situation one may be working with. In reality, we all need to be creative with any planning process to make it work. Once we understand the process and the values underlying it, we should feel free to use the process flexibly and creatively. As you gain more experience in using a particular approach to planning, you will see how adapting it can actually make it work better for specific individuals.

3 We insist people use the planning process who haven't yet adopted the values underlying it.

There's an old saying: "A mind changed against its will is of that opinion still." New planning processes are not supposed to be new ways to do the same old thing and think in the same old ways. An innovative planning process can be corrupted if people apply old values to it. So forcing people to use this planning process, without first working with them to understand and adopt the values, may not result in positive outcomes for the people we serve. Some people may not

be able to adopt the values. They should be free to opt out of undertaking this planning with people. In the long run, our values are more important than anything else we bring to our work.

Key Values Essential to this Process

- ◆ *As a matter of human rights, there should be a place in our workforce for every single citizen who wants to work. If our society does not live up to this, it is society that needs to change, not the people excluded from opportunities to work.*
- ◆ *People have a right to set their own goals, even if those goals really challenge us.*
- ◆ *People have capacities, gifts, talents and skills that can and will help them achieve satisfying careers, and our expertise lies in recognizing and capitalizing on them.*
- ◆ *Building on positive potential will make our work easier and more enjoyable than if we focus on fixing deficits.*
- ◆ *Supporting informed choice means taking the time and making the effort to offer real options in ways that allow people genuinely explore and understand those options.*
- ◆ *We will have less work to do in the long run if we help people find the jobs and careers they really want.*

How this Approach Differs from the Traditional

This career planning process is focused on capitalizing on assets and strengths. This means we begin with identifying assets and strengths, rather than barriers. This approach is based on the basic assumption that the path we choose for achieving a

specific goal will partly determine the number of barriers we encounter. By taking this asset-based approach, we can assist people to lay out a path to reaching a career goal, which utilizes and capitalizes on their assets and strengths. This will minimize the number of barriers that the person faces. If we start instead by identifying barriers, we are likely to end



There is something that is much scarcer, something finer by far, something rarer than ability. It is the ability to recognize ability.



up with more barriers to overcome because we are not creating a path to the goal based on people's assets and strengths.

Being "barrier-oriented" can seem like focusing on deficits or being "problem-oriented" rather than "solution-oriented". While overcoming barriers is critical for people to reach their career goals, knowing where people are headed and why is even more important. Instead of focusing only or primarily on what is preventing people from achieving their career goals, we need to be aware of every asset they possess and every opportunity that presents itself along the way, which can help us assist people to reach their goals — sometimes through by-passing barriers altogether without having to overcome them.

John McKnight and John Kretzmann are the creators of an asset-based approach to community development.^v They argue that "outside resources (provided to a community) will be much more effectively used if the local community is itself

fully mobilized and its internal assets are being fully utilized..." (p. 8). The same can be said for individuals to whom we provide resources in order to assist them to achieve career goals. McKnight and Kretzmann describe asset-based community development as beginning with "what is present...not with what is absent, or with what is problematic, or with what is needed" (p. 9). They say that the part of people that contributes to personal growth and change are their capacities. Therefore, we need to start by identifying these.

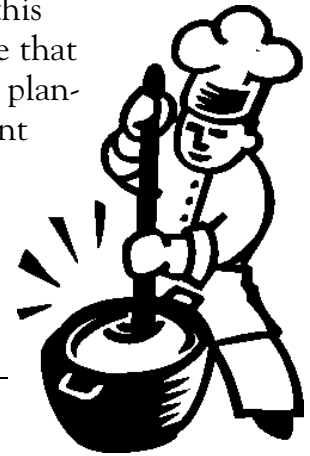
Person Centered

In addition to being more capacity-oriented than barrier-oriented, this planning process also uses person-centered planning methods, rather than a vocational profile, to help people choose the right career and job goals for them. In this process, not only are the questions we ask open-ended (as with the vocational profile), but the process of questioning is itself open-ended. In other words, we don't assume that once we have answered a certain pre-established set of questions for the first time, we then have all of the information we need to assist a particular individual to make and pursue a career choice. Choosing and developing a career are instead viewed as an evolving process, based on who people are and their life experiences - things that change over time. So questioning and information-gathering about the individual, his/her life experience and career choices are ongoing rather than time-limited activities.

This career planning process is designed to allow for this ongoing reflection, which ulti-

mately guides the specific work we do with individuals on different goals that will be set over time. The primary reason for adopting this approach is to ensure that the process of career planning and development does not stop with initial job placement.

Recipe for Success



As well, the traditional community assessment takes on a new function in this process: it is used after the person has chosen an initial career goal and has identified some specific jobs within that career area, which s/he would like to try-out through work experience. The assessment - something we've called the Recipe For Success tool - is carried out as part of the job exploration phase in which the person gets the opportunity to try out different jobs in the career area s/he has selected. The Recipe For Success tool is designed to be situation-specific, and is intended to evaluate how well the job opportunity that is being explored fits with who the career seeker is. The goal

of using the tool is to begin to determine the kind of training, support (external and natural), routines, checklists, accommodations, environmental adaptations, or other things the person would need to be successful. Undertaking this type of assessment will provide the vital information needed to help the person achieve a chosen career or job goal, thereby increasing genuine self-determination. So instead of using the

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assessment to determine the goal - we use the assessment to determine how to make the goal work out successfully for the career seeker.

Useful, Relevant Assessments

The problem with assessments, which are not job or work-site specific, is that without some focus on a particular job or worksite, there is virtually endless information that could be collected. Because

assessments are necessarily time-limited, they are therefore limited in the scope of the information they can reveal. This ultimately means that using them to determine job or career goals will limit the choice available to the person, based on the limited information collected. For instance, traditional assessments or profiles require observation of people, but either in activities they currently are involved in or in a non-specific community experience - neither of which are likely to be directly related to their career or initial employment goals. This is particularly the case if these career goals have not been discussed before this observation is done. In addition, traditional assessments or profiles ask you to evaluate broad-based categories like functional skills, mobility skills or communication skills. Again, because every situation - particularly employment situation - is different, it is important we consider these skill areas within a context. Since we are primarily focused on assisting people to secure employment, it makes sense that we consider these skill areas within an employment experience, which matches the preferences of the person. In that

way, we maximize the relevance and usefulness of the information we gather.

With this approach, we believe the Recipe For Success tool can be used in a more focused, goal-oriented, and effective way. By using this tool as part of the job

exploration and try-out phase, we can get at the most vital information we need: what is needed to make the person successful in their chosen career and job area.

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Moving Beyond Traditional Approaches to Supported Employment

Business As Usual

The goal is to get people jobs in the community as quickly and efficiently as possible.

The Employment Specialist, DVR Counselor, and others are in charge. The job seeker is a passive participant in the process and understands little about how the process works.

An employment goal is set based primarily on the results of an assessment, often not conducted in a community employment context that has anything to do with the person's own career/employment goals.

Job developers get to know jobs that are available and then find people with disabilities to slot into these jobs.

Jobs found are usually short-term and entry level. Any job that is available is considered acceptable.

People change jobs only when they have to, usually moving from one entry level job to another which has little to do with the first job or a career goal.

People experience frustration and boredom with the jobs they get. They may quit jobs repeatedly because of this.

The PTI Career Planning Process

The goal is to help people develop long-term careers, enabling them to eventually become self-supporting and go off benefits.

The career seeker understands the process being used to assist him/her to find a job and career. The career seeker knows who is there to assist him/her and decides who to involve on his/her team.

Some career areas to explore are chosen, based primarily on a person-centered planning process. Career exploration enables the person to decide on a career goal s/he wants to pursue. Jobs that are likely to suit the person, and which fit with his/her chosen career goal, are identified. The Recipe For Success tool is used as part of the job exploration phase, where the person gets a chance to try-out specific jobs within his/her chosen career area. The Employment Specialist uses the tool to determine what the person needs to be successful in each specific job being explored.

Job developers get to know each person with a disability, and then find jobs that fit each person.

Jobs found are connected in some way to a long-term career goal. If a job can't be found, job creation work is undertaken.

People change jobs when they want to, usually to pursue their career goal and build on previous employment experience.

People experience job satisfaction, less frustration, greater sense of accomplishment and personal control over their lives and futures.

Conclusion

This different way of doing things places great emphasis on the fact that the goals of job placement and career achievement are very different but also very inter-connected. For most of us, getting a job is typically a part of the larger process of achieving a career, and is likely to occur more than once in the process of career achievement. However, the distinction between having a job and building a career is often overlooked for people with developmental disabilities. Funders of supported employment services often pay for job placement (from unemployment to employment), but offer little incentive for helping people achieve longer-term career goals or promotions. Because this is the case, people are likely to stay in the jobs they initially acquire, even if these jobs don't really relate to their career goals or they are capable of moving on to better employment opportunities. And when frustration sets in, people are likely to quit these jobs and end up unemployed again.

Career vs. Job

In order to change our perspective on the importance of career development, it's important to think about how we would explain the difference between a job and a career to the people we serve. We might say that a career is the paid work you do throughout your life. We would explain that when people choose a career, they

usually choose an area of work (e.g. working with animals) and then they do different jobs in that area throughout their lives. We may well say that if you work in this way, you can build up experience as time passes, and that will mean you

can get better jobs at better pay as you get older. This is why having a career goal and a path to achieving that goal is more important than just getting a job. And we may point out that without a career goal, you could end up moving from job to job, and always finding yourself in entry-level positions because you are hopping around from one area of work to another. Without a career goal, you might also get a job and end up staying in that job forever, even though doing this may not help you grow and reach your full potential. For all of these reasons, we would explain that choosing a career is a very important decision.

So what are the ways we can build on what we already do in order to make career planning more paramount than job placement? And in keeping with the growing self-determination movement, how can we create a process which better involves and empowers the people with developmental disabilities we serve? How do we start where people are at: in some cases, at a point where people have no readily identifiable career goal of their own, no experience of employment or no experience other than sheltered workshops? How do we resist the temptation to use our skills of assessment to

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decide for people what their career and employment goals should be, and instead accompany people through a process that enables them to discover their own capacities, interests and goals? We hope this planning process will provide an example of career planning that can address all of these challenges.

The beauty of the Pathways career planning process is that the employment specialist is no longer expected to “do it all.” Instead, s/he facilitates the career planning process, which involves people with developmental disabilities and their allies as far as possible in a team effort that leads to genuine achievement of self-selected career goals. It’s important to keep in mind that the process of setting and achieving goals can be as empowering and growth-producing for the person with a developmental disability as the employment and career outcome they achieve through that process.

Roles of the Pathways Professionals

Before you begin using this career planning process, it is important for you to understand your role and the role of other professional members of each career seeker’s planning team. It is important that you help involved DVR Counselors and Benefits Specialists to understand their roles in this career planning process, because these roles may well be different from what they are accustomed to. Please read this section in order to understand the roles that you and other professionals are envisioned to play.

The composition of each person’s career planning team will differ from person to person and may change over time. However, the core members of each per-

son’s team include: the DVR Counselor; the Employment Specialist; and the Benefits Specialist. We refer to these three professionals as core members because they are part of every career seeker’s team. However, they should never be the only people who belong to a particular individual’s career planning team. Since it is vitally important, when doing person-centered planning, to involve the people who know the person best, it is a given that family members and friends, personally selected by the career seeker, will also be members of the career planning team.

Most important however, is that the professional members of the team should view themselves as providers of service - their role is mainly to listen and respond to what the career seeker and others who know the person well are saying they want or prefer. The professionals can offer information and suggestions from their wide experience when asked, or when this would help the career seeker and those who know him/her best to understand the choices available. But the professionals are not there to exercise their authority and “pronounce” what is best for the career seeker.

The Employment Specialist, as has been previously discussed, supports and assists the career seeker and his/her career planning team to identify a career goal and to make a plan that will help the person advance along his/her career path. With input and assistance from other members of the career planning team, the Employment Specialist uses his/her invaluable creativity and expertise to help the career seeker explore potential career and employment possibilities. Ultimately, the Employment Specialist finds, develops, and creates an employment opportunity that matches the career

seeker's skills and preferences, and fits with the career seeker's chosen career goal. Finally, the Employment Specialist ensures the necessary training and supports are in place, which will enable the person to be successful.

The DVR Counselor is an integral part of the team. She/he can help the career seeker to access the full range of services that the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has to offer. If the DVR Counselor has referred the person for Pathways services, s/he may already know the participant well. If this is the case, the DVR Counselor can participate on the team as someone who knows the person well, as well as being a provider of service.

The needs of each career seeker are unique and varied.

Once the Career Planning Team has helped the career seeker to identify his/her needs, DVR is available to provide a variety of services. Examples of services funded by DVR include: transportation; tuition; workplace modifications; specialized equipment; job development; job coaching; vocational guidance & counseling; and assistive technology. Few people realize that DVR's menu of services (which defines what it can fund) includes far more than just the above examples. It is important that you familiarize yourself with the entire range of services which DVR can fund so that you will be prepared to ask for whatever each career seeker needs (e.g. more time for career exploration; services to for career advancement where the person is 'under-

employed' in his/her current position; etc.). These services can be funded by DVR if requested. For more information on DVR visit:

www.dwd.state.wi.us/dvr/jobseek.htm and www.dwd.state.wi.us/dvr/publications/PVR-250-P.htm#WhatServicesCanDVR

Little has been written about the role of the **Benefits Specialist** in this manual because this manual is designed to guide Employment Specialists in their work. Benefits Specialists learn their craft from trainings specific to that subject. However, since the potential loss of benefits is one of the most persistent and pervasive fears among persons with disabilities (and their families), the involvement of a Benefits Specialist is crucial to the success of this career planning process.

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... the potential loss of benefits is one of the most persistent and pervasive fears among persons with disabilities ...
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The Benefits Specialist does a thorough analysis of the person's benefits and services, and determines the impact that earned income would have on them. Making

this information available and understandable to the career seeker, and to his/her Career Planning Team, is a vital part of the process. Fran Traynor, PTI Benefits Specialist at United Cerebral Palsy of Southeastern Wisconsin points out: "If a consumer doesn't understand his/her own benefits right from the start, and how increased work might affect them, the person can be very taken aback when one or more benefits goes away because of increased income. The Benefits Specialist can do his/her job well but after a certain point there may be no more work incentives to apply for

and benefits stop because earned income reaches a certain level and regularity. The consumer should be helped to make informed decisions about working more, earning more, using work incentives such as PASS and IRWE, and making choices about medical insurance (i.e. Medicaid versus employer insurance)."

A Benefits Specialist can offer this important information to the career seeker, as the various circumstances that impact upon benefits arise. Once the person is employed, the Benefits Specialist monitors the career seeker's benefits to ensure that s/he continues to receive needed services. However, it is important that career seekers ask for the facts, and get the facts, before they make decisions that may affect their benefits. In addition, it is important for career seekers to understand that although the Benefits Specialist will provide information to the Social Security Administration regarding an individual's benefits, the Benefits Specialist has no real control over SSA's decisions.

You may wish to review a copy of an initial benefits analysis, which we have included in Appendix D, in order to understand the kind of information the Benefits Specialist is expected to contribute to the career planning process.

County Case Manager Involvement

Many career seekers with developmental disabilities will need ongoing vocational support services in order to maintain employment and to help them advance along their career path. In the Pathways program, DVR funds initial services, including career planning and job development. However, after the

person has successfully located employment and an initial period of "settling in" has passed, it is expected that the county will take on responsibility for funding any continued supports that may be needed. If it appears that long-term support services are likely to be necessary, and the person is not already receiving services from the county where s/he lives, it is necessary to help him/her apply for these services. Once the person is accepted by the county, he/she will be assigned a county case manager who should become a member of the person's career planning team.

Other Possible Members of a Person's Career Planning Team

Others who may become members of a particular individual's career planning team are individuals who, either by themselves or through the agencies or businesses which they represent, can offer assistance or advice to the career seeker as s/he decides on a career goal and works on obtaining employment. Depending upon the career seeker and his/her unique needs and preferences, others who may be included are: teachers (a definite if the person is still in school and a very valuable resource if the person attended high school in the recent past); community employers; a specialist in rehabilitation or assistive technology; or an occupational or speech therapist.

Inviting these community resource people to join the career planning team is an efficient way to obtain valuable information that it would otherwise take the Employment Specialist significant time to research and collect. It is also an excellent way to



demonstrate to community members that the career seeker is simply another member of the community who needs “a little help from his/her friends” (as do we all) to find a job! Be careful however to avoid a scenario in which there are more people who are professionals offering service than there are people who know the career seeker well.

i Roger von Oech, *A Kick In The Seat Of The Pants*, 1986: Harper Perennial.

ii Ibid.

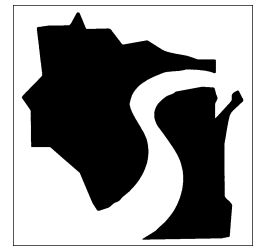
iii APSE, “Ethical Guidelines for Professionals in Supported Employment” by Dale Dileo, Rebecca McDonald, and Susan Killam. Undated.

iv Taken from “Toward Integrated Employment for All: A Background Paper for Advocates.” Written by Dale Dileo, Pat Rogan, Tammara Geary Freeman. Published: January, 2000.

v Kretzmann, John & McKnight, John L. (1993). *Building Communities From The Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*. Chicago, IL: ACTA Publications.

PATHWAYS TO INDEPENDENCE

Sharing the Journey: Helping People with Developmental Disabilities Find & Follow The Career Path That's Right For Them



The 15 Steps in this Career Planning Process

We believe understanding the fundamental steps of this career planning process is the first step anyone can take to making the process a success. Everyone who is asked to do something will usually do it much more effectively and successfully if they know why they are doing it and where each task fits in the overall path to reaching the goal of successful employment for the career seeker. With this in mind, the 15-step pattern of this career planning process is as follows:

- 1** Person makes informed choice to enter Pathways to Independence.
- 2** Enrollment process is completed.
- 3** Person learns about Career Planning Process.
- 4** Person assembles his/her Career Planning Team.
- 5** Person and Employment Specialist complete Career Planning Workbook.
- 6** First Career Planning Meeting takes place. Plan for career exploration is made.
- 7** Career exploration and Community Mapping Tool are completed.
- 8** Second Career Planning Meeting takes place. Choice of initial career goal / direction is made. Plan for job exploration is made.
- 9** Focused exploration of specific jobs within the chosen career area is undertaken. Recipe For Success Tool is completed on each job being considered.
- 10** Third Career Planning Meeting takes place. Initial, acceptable employment goals are decided and ranked. Plan for job development is made.
- 11** Job development, creation, carving or self-employment opportunities are pursued. Recipe For Success Tool is completed on each job being considered. Additional Career Planning Team meetings are held as needed to complete process.
- 12** Initial employment secured; training/on-going support plan put into action.
- 13** Career seeker settles into job.
- 14** Natural Support Strategies Tool is used. Plan for increasing natural supports developed and put into action.
- 15** After 2-3 years, or when opportunity arises, plan for promotion within career area is developed and put into action.

Simple, Logical Steps

Some readers may react to the 15 steps with charges of oversimplification. They would argue that no person's actual experience will go this smoothly and that completing some steps will be much easier than others. We would not disagree. Nothing about real life and real people is straightforward or simple, and the purpose of outlining the 15 steps of this process is not to suggest this is the case. Instead, we introduce these steps to lay out a logical pattern of necessary steps we believe will maximize the likelihood of success for the career seeker. Depending on the person you are working with however, some steps may be combined or broken down which will result in individually tailored processes that could have more or less than 15 steps. What's important is the pattern of the process: the pattern of discussion, information collection, decision-making and action steps. We've spent considerable time ensuring that the pattern of the process is logical and that each step builds on what has gone before. Changing the pattern we feel would undermine the integrity of the process and the likelihood it can result in positive outcomes. However, flexibility in following the pattern of the process is assumed to be required. The likelihood of success comes from both completing all the steps (not skipping any because it's more convenient), and broadly following the order of the steps (not skipping around because this will most likely negatively influence the career seeker's deci-

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Nothing about real life and real people is straightforward or simple, and the purpose of outlining the 15 steps of this process is not to suggest this is the case.
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sion-making process, and their ability to exercise self-determination).

All Necessary Steps

Still other readers may react to the 15 steps by concluding many are unnecessary and the field of supported employment is best served by placing people in jobs in the most expedient way possible. Here, we would disagree. While increasing the number of people with developmental disabilities who are successfully employed in the community is a high priority for all of us, reducing the number of job placements that fail because of inadequate planning or dissatisfaction of the

career seeker is an even more critical goal for those who wish to advance and solidify both Wisconsin's and America's commitment to supported employment. We must resist the quick-fix employment strategies that only cost both the person and vocational providers in the long run. What's more, a commitment to incorporating self-determination into supported employment means a commitment to investing the time necessary to enable meaningful consumer choice. Committing this extra time is often reflected in greater investment in *the process* of helping people decide on career and employment goals, and then find good quality jobs.

The Importance of the Process

For a long time now, a great deal of attention has been paid to placing people in employment (outcomes); but what happens (other than formal assessments) in the process of reaching these outcomes is not talked about very much. Because of this reality, we run the risk of focusing too much on outcomes rather than process. One reason we do this is because we readily acknowledge all of the benefits of employment for people with developmental disabilities. So naturally, we want to get them into employment as quickly as possible. Often however, we overlook the benefits for people with developmental disabilities of being involved in an empowering, person-centered, highly experiential process that will lead to employment. In focusing more on self-determination, we have begun to recognize how important the process, as well as the outcome, is in our overall success. In this career planning approach, the process matters as much as the outcome, and we seek to use a process that offers the same opportunities for personal growth that community employment offers. If we can think about our work in this way, investing time in the process becomes easier for us to justify.

The Steps Explained

In addition to the tools we have developed, which are used in a number of the steps, we thought it would be helpful to offer some explanation about what we envision for each of the steps, including tips we have learned from experience of using this process.

1 Person makes informed choice to enter Pathways to Independence.

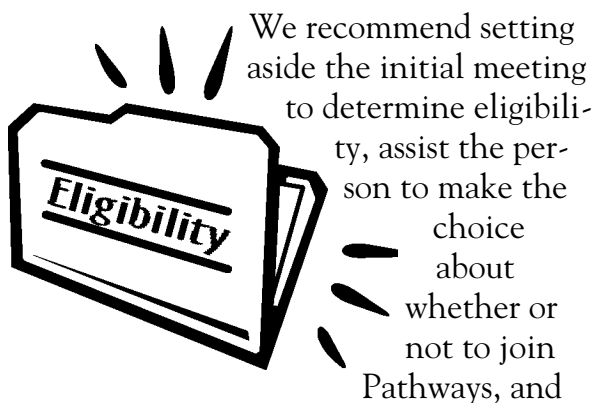
The first, most critical step for self-deter-

mination is the genuine opportunity to understand Pathways to Independence and make a conscious, informed choice to join the program. The choice of providers and programs is very new for both people with developmental disabilities and service providers. For so long, people were routinely referred to particular programs, based on the results of professional assessments and the capacity of certain programs or providers to accommodate more consumers. So business as usual now needs to be replaced with a process that allows and enables people to make a choice about entering Pathways. Offering people this choice can help with clarifying the expectations of all involved, enhancing motivation and enthusiasm among career seekers, and increasing (at a very early stage) the sense of control career seekers feel over their employment futures.

The methods we have developed to enable people to make the most informed choice they can make about joining Pathways include:

- ◆ *An easy-to-understand eligibility form.*
- ◆ *An easy-to-understand brochure about Pathways to Independence.*
- ◆ *A video depicting the services offered by Pathways and the benefits of being employed.*
- ◆ *An easy-to-understand legal release of information form.*

All of these resources can be found in Appendix A. If you work for a supported employment agency that is not a Pathways provider, you can develop your own easy-to-understand brochure and simple slide show that explains your agency's services. You can also adapt the eligibility form and release of information form if this is necessary.



complete the necessary enrollment paperwork, or at least begin the completion of this paperwork. The first thing to discuss with a person is whether or not s/he is eligible for Pathways. There is little point in discussing the benefits of being involved in Pathways if a person is not eligible. Therefore, we recommend completing the eligibility form with the person as a first step. Then, go through the accessible brochure and show the video. You should be familiar with the contents of the brochure and the video before you meet with the person. As you do more and more enrollments, you will become increasingly skilled at explaining Pathways in ways that people of varying abilities can understand.

A key concept in Pathways (which is new for all of us!) is the focus on careers. Many people with developmental disabilities will not be familiar with the term "career", nor will they understand how this differs from a job. It is important they begin to understand this at the initial enrollment meeting, although their understanding of this will develop over time and with experience in the career planning process. Some people may offer information about their employment or career goals. Make a note of any goals the career seeker brings up; but also remember that the purpose of the career planning process is to help people explore

and consider their career and employment goals. No one should really be expected to know these goals before they embark on the process. Many times, if we ask people these sorts of questions without any process to enable informed choice, their answers will be greatly limited by:

- ◆ *their own life experiences, which are often very limited;*
- ◆ *the expectations of others in regard to their abilities;*
- ◆ *their knowledge of jobs that people with developmental disabilities typically have.*

Part of avoiding the quick-fix trap is to be patient about setting career and employment goals.

One way to further facilitate informed choice is to have a way of explaining how Pathways compares to other vocational program opportunities the person may have. This will vary from area to area, and from time to time, so we have not included any specific comparisons although generally, the comparisons would involve:

- ◆ *Supported Employment*
- ◆ *Sheltered Workshops*
- ◆ *Non-Work Day Programs*
- ◆ *No Program At All*

The final part of this initial meeting involves explaining and getting a signature on the release of information. In the past, these documents were often signed with little ceremony. In other words, there was little or no attempt to explain what a release of information actually means. Therefore, we enlisted the support of an attorney with a keen commitment to self-determination. He designed the sample release of information, and the guidance notes for explaining this form to people with cognitive disabilities,

that you will find in Appendix A. One thing we tried to keep in mind (and we hope you will too!) is that existing Wisconsin laws give consumers the right to see their files.ⁱ In order to truly respect the spirit of this law, we need to make sure these files are as easy to understand as possible. Keep this in mind as you design forms and keep notes for consumer files. We believe a person's right to information can be greatly undermined if information is kept in formats that are not accessible to the person about whom the information is written.

2 Enrollment process is completed.

As we said earlier, the enrollment forms can be completed or partially completed in the initial meeting. Depending on how many forms there are - less is beautiful, in this case - you may want to set up a second meeting to complete all of the forms. Other aspects of enrollment you may need to plan with the person are:

- ◆ *Choosing and meeting with a DVR Counselor to get a purchase order for Pathways services.*
- ◆ *Meeting with the Benefits Specialist and understanding the role of the Benefits Specialist in helping the person reach his/her career and employment goals.*

3 Person learns about Career Planning Process.

The next meeting between the Employment Specialist and the career seeker should be spent digging in to the career planning process, which the person is about to embark upon. Just like it is important for you to understand the 15

steps introduced at the beginning of this section, it is equally important for the career seeker to understand what s/he will be doing with you in order to set and reach career and employment goals, and why each step is important for success. In order to facilitate the task of explaining the career planning process to the career seeker, we created a tool that illustrates the steps that the career seeker will take, with your help, as a Pathways participant. (This tool can be found in the career seeker's manual, which should be given to the career seeker at this point in the process. A copy can also be found in Appendix A.)

The tool not only lays out the entire process in a brief and simple format, but is also designed to be re-used as the career seeker advances through the process. His/her progress toward achieving employment and career goals can be demonstrated by movement over time through the various steps. This can help both the Employment Specialist and the career seeker understand and keep focused on the journey they are on together, and can clearly remind them at any point about what the next step will be. Again, repetitive use of the tool, as with explaining the concept of career, will help career seekers increase their understanding of the process and the goals they are working toward, and it will assist the career seeker to explain the process to others who may become involved along the way.

After you have provided an overview of the career planning process, you can go on to review steps one and two of the tool, which the person has already completed. Then, as part of step three, you will need to review the role of the career seeker in the career planning process.

We label this role as “leader” to encourage career seekers to understand the control and responsibility they have to lead and participate in their own career planning process. (There is a simple explanation of the role of the career planning team leader in the career seeker’s manual and a copy of this is included in Appendix B. of this manual.)

4 Person assembles his/her Career Planning Team.

The next step in the process is for the career seeker to understand the role of the Career Planning Team and to decide who s/he would like to invite to be on his/her Career Planning Team. (There is a simple explanation of the role of the Career Planning Team in the career seeker’s manual and a copy of this is also included in Appendix B. of this manual.) It is important to review this before talking with the career seeker about who s/he would like to invite to be part of his/her career planning team.

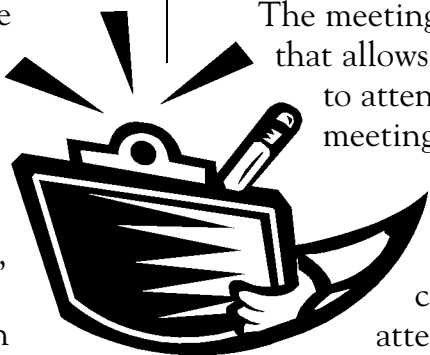
In order to make it easier for the career seeker to decide on and organize his/her career planning team, we created two worksheets that help the career seeker identify important and supportive people in his/her life, as well as a Career Planning Team Membership Sheet and an Individual Member Information Sheet. (Samples of these can be found in Appendix B. of this manual, and those to be used with the career seeker are included in the career seeker’s manual, after the simple explanation of the career planning team.) It’s a good idea if the Employment Specialist copies the career seeker’s team member information sheets and keep them so that s/he can easily contact team members as needed. You

may want to use the back of each sheet to keep track of contact you have had with each team member. Once you know who the career seeker plans to invite to join his/her team, you can call each of these people and introduce yourself, explain Pathways, and let them know why their participation is important for the career seeker.

Once the person has decided who s/he would like on his/her career planning team, you will need to explain what the first career planning team meeting is all about. (There is a simple explanation of the first career planning meeting in the career seeker’s manual and a copy of this is included in Appendix B. of this manual.) The next step is to set up the first career planning meeting and extend invitations to all team members. The meeting should be held someplace the career seeker is comfortable and familiar with. Community places are ideal for changing the atmosphere from service-dominated to egalitarian and consumer-centered.

The meeting should be held at a time that allows all invited participants to attend. It’s critical that the meeting not be scheduled at a time or held in a place where the support people identified by the career seeker cannot attend. The first career planning meeting should last

about 2 1/2 hours so it is important to let those invited know both a starting time and an estimated finish time. (A checklist to help the career seeker organize and prepare for his/her first career planning meeting can be found in the career seeker’s manual and a copy is also included in Appendix B. of this manual.)



5 Person and Employment Specialist complete Career Planning Workbook.

One of the most important ways to ensure truly personalized career and employment goals are set is to focus first and foremost on understanding who the career seeker is. Both the person, and the variety of people who have known the person (either for a long time, in an employment or educational environment, or as the result of the person's current lifestyle) are important sources for developing a total profile of the career seeker. The primary goal in terms of preparing for the first career planning meeting, is for the career seeker, with the help of the employment specialist, to create as full a picture as possible of who s/he is.

This is a departure from the traditional assessment, which was often completed by the Employment Specialist and then reported on by the Employment Specialist at the vocational planning meeting. In this career planning process, the Employment Specialist learns about the career seeker by helping the career seeker develop his/her own profile. More importantly, the Employment Specialist assists the career seeker to present this information at the first career planning meeting, and the profile is then further developed by the comments offered from other Career Planning Team members. In this career planning process, we are asking and assisting people with developmental disabilities to know and understand themselves - not simply to rely on others to "assess" them.

This approach is also a departure from the traditional assessment in that it is mostly based on information that already exists, and does not require the Employment Specialist to observe the

career seeker in particular settings and make judgments from these limited observations about the career seeker's capacities.ⁱⁱ No doubt however, the Employment Specialist will learn important things about the person through the process of assisting the person to develop his/her own profile.

In order to record the various types of information that will together make up the career seeker's profile, a Career Planning Workbook has been developed. (This workbook is included in the career seeker's manual, and a copy for the Employment Specialist's reference can be found in Appendix B. of this manual.) It is suggested that the Employment Specialist make a copy (with permission of course!) of each page of the career seeker's workbook as it is completed. It is also suggested that the Employment Specialists keep his/her own notes and observations on separate paper so that the impressions of the Employment Specialist do not get mixed in with the views of the career seeker, and others who know the person well that you may talk to with the career seeker as part of the process of completing the Workbook. When recording information in the Career Planning Workbook, another helpful suggestion is to record the career seeker's own views in blue pen and the views of others whom s/he knows well in

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In this career planning process, we are asking and assisting people with developmental disabilities to know and understand themselves - not simply to rely on others to "assess" them.
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black pen. Again, this helps distinguish the different points of view about the person, and ensures we can always clearly delineate what the person's own views are.

Be creative about how you assist the career seeker to fill out the Career Planning Workbook. Meet the career seeker in places where s/he currently spends time, and arrange to go with the person to meet others who know the person well, as part of the process of filling out the Workbook. People will generally need stimulation from familiar places, activities and people to provide thorough answers to all of the questions in the Career Planning Workbook. Meeting only with the career seeker, in an unfamiliar office, will likely yield very poor results.

6 First Career Planning Meeting takes place.

In this planning process, we get rid of the notion of "vocational goal" and replace this with long and short-term goals. The career goal is the long-term goal, and the initial job/employment goal that relates to that career is the short-term goal. This career planning process begins by exploring and setting long-term career goals. Therefore, the most important goal of the first career planning meeting is to make a plan for career exploration, based on a thorough understanding of the career seeker - both who s/he is and what s/he wants in terms of an ideal career. (An outline for the first career planning meeting can be found in Appendix C. of this manual.) You will notice that the first half of the meeting is spent answering the questions just mentioned: who the career seeker is and what s/he wants

in terms of an ideal career. The information in the Career Planning Workbook is shared and then expanded upon, based on comments from others who know the person well. Then the career planning team is put to work. A brainstorming session is done, generating a list of possible career goals that fit with the profile of the person that has just been developed.

After the brainstorming, the career seeker (with the help of the team) sizes up the list of brainstormed career possibilities. From this, the career seeker is asked to identify the top three career areas s/he would like to actively explore with the help of the Employment Specialist. Tips for what to do, if making this decision is difficult, are included in the outline.

The action planning part of the first meeting has to do with developing ideas and strategies for how career exploration can be done. The variety of career exploration techniques is discussed later in this manual; but in part, the goal of developing ideas and strategies with the career planning team is to make maximum use of the knowledge and connections of all team members, so that career exploration can be facilitated by natural connections that team members may have to share. A second part of the

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action planning involves developing basic information on other highly rated career possibilities that did not make “the top three.” For these, the help of career planning team members is enlisted to broaden the information on career choices that is ultimately made available to the career seeker. Finally, progress and next steps for the benefits analysis is discussed, which will come into play more centrally when specific job development is undertaken, after the second career planning meeting.

Following the outline in Appendix C. is a description of the roles that the career seeker plays in the first career planning meeting. Defining these roles explicitly ensures the career seeker has a key part in the meeting, and lessens the likelihood the meeting goes on with the career seeker having only passive involvement in the process. This list is not meant to be a limiting one. In other words, career seekers can play many more roles than are listed; but to ensure their involvement, they should play no less of a role than that described.

You’ll notice, from the introductory notes that precede the outline of the first career planning meeting, that a neutral facilitator is recommended. By neu-

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**Remember, you
are facilitating
another
person’s
process.**

**It is not your
process.**

Do not intrude.

Do not control.

**Do not force
your own needs
and insights
into the
foreground.**

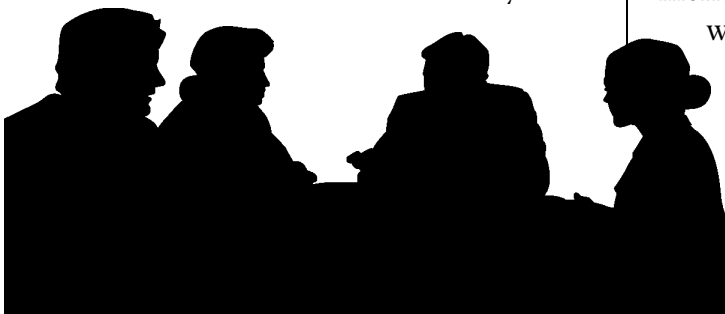
**If you do not
trust a person’s
process, that
person will not
trust you.**

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tral, we mean someone who is not a member of the career planning team for the individual, but is rather someone independent of that team who can facilitate without having a personal or professional investment in the specific outcomes of the planning meeting. Using a neutral facilitator also allows the Employment Specialist to actively and fully participate in the process, and take detailed notes, rather than having to be pre-occupied by facilitating the interactions of the group and accomplishing the agenda set. In general, people agree this is preferable to being responsible for both facilitation and notes. However, going this route clearly calls for the time and commitment of a facilitator, in addition to the Employment Specialist and the rest of the career planning team. Simple resource and time constraints

within your organization may not allow for this. Yet, there is the possibility of Employment Specialists acting as facilitators for career seekers working with other Employment Specialists and vice versa. Additionally, there may be the possibility of one staff person from your organization taking on the role of facilitator for all career planning meetings. This last suggested approach encourages the development of well-honed facilitator skills,

which comes from intensive experience of filling this role. If neither of these options is possible, it may be that you, as the Employment Specialist, find yourself facilitating the career planning meetings for the career seekers whom you serve.



In any case, it is worth commenting here on the role of the facilitator.

Acting as a facilitator for any form of person-centered planning meetings has developed into a distinct “art” and much has been written about what it means to fill this role effectively. Basic tips and advice for facilitating include:

- ◆ *Keep the conversation moving along and keep things positive.*
- ◆ *Make sure everyone knows each other and why they are at the meeting (e.g. to support Linda in developing plans for achieving a rewarding career).*
- ◆ *Start with something to break the ice (e.g. a fun activity, personal story, a positive local or national news story).*
- ◆ *Use your body posture and facial expressions to encourage conversation and to show acceptance of whatever is said.*
- ◆ *If someone gets off the topic, try to redirect the conversation or suggest talking about the issue later.*
- ◆ *Respect every person's right to choose not to talk.*
- ◆ *If someone becomes uncomfortable or upset, offer to take a break or end the meeting and reschedule later.*
- ◆ *End the meeting with a positive summary of what was discussed and what you hope to do next time.*

(Tips taken from: “Using Individual-Centered Planning for Self-Directed Services,” developed by Allen Shea and Associates.)

Overall, good quality facilitation of person-centered planning meetings involves good listening skills; good summarizing skills; attention to intentionally involving the career seeker throughout the meeting; and an ability to recognize common strands of agreement among team members, even when disagreement may

seem to prevail. The most critical art of facilitation however, is the ability to engage team members both in the process and in committing to helping in some way (big or small) with implementing the action plans that develop out of these planning meetings. There is no doubt that experience is the best teacher, as is observation of other facilitators whenever the opportunity might arise.

Care should be taken in writing up a meeting summary and action plan for everyone who attended. It is most important to be thorough and accurate, rather than brief. Brief notes often lose the meaning and detail of what went on - precisely the things we want to hold onto! It's a good idea to write down the details, so that everyone sees the process of the meeting represented in the notes. Again, it is important to keep in mind maximizing accessibility when describing what took place at someone's career planning meeting.

7 Career Exploration and Community Mapping Tool are completed.

Rather than write extensively here on career exploration strategies and tools, we refer you now to Part 3. of the manual where a separate discussion of career exploration can be found. Of course, your work will involve adapting these general strategies and tools to fit the unique situation of the career seekers with whom you work. However, these strategies and tools are tried and tested approaches to career exploration that are generally accepted as good practice throughout the field of supported employment.

During the time in which career exploration is taking place, the Employment Specialist has a unique opportunity to simultaneously undertake a process called community mapping, first created by Krietzmann and McKnight who you'll recall we mentioned in Part 1. of the manual for their theory of developing communities through an asset-based approach. Instead of undertaking their more general, comprehensive approach to community mapping, we have created a guidance tool for mapping the local community of the career seeker with a specific focus on identifying the assets of the community in relation to career and employment opportunities. (A copy of this Community Mapping Tool can be found in Appendix D. of this manual.) The Employment Specialist can learn about local community assets in relation to career and employment opportunities through job shadowing, work experience, informational interviews with employers, as well as separate exploratory work beyond that associated with assisting the career seeker in career exploration activities. In addition, you may want to refer to the notes you took, while assisting the career seeker to complete the Career Planning Workbook, for helpful information about the community that you may have discovered. The community map, once complete, will be a vital resource for job development and can be re-used with future career seekers who live in the same community. It is suggested that copies of all community maps be kept in a binder so that other Employment Specialists can refer to them when working with career seekers from the same area. Of course, it is assumed that once general community mapping is done, it is likely that some personalized community mapping will be done for specific career seekers, which

may not be relevant for generalized use. It is also assumed that from time to time, community maps will have to be updated to reflect changes that have taken place in the community.

8 Second Career Planning Meeting takes place.

The main goals of the second career planning meeting are:

- ◆ *To establish the broad career goal that the career seeker wishes to pursue, and*
- ◆ *To create a plan for job exploration that is consistent with that career goal.*

(An outline for the second career planning meeting can be found in Appendix C. of this manual.) The second career planning meeting begins by recapping the brainstormed list of career opportunities and the action plan for career exploration that was developed in the first meeting. Then, the career seeker is asked to report back on how his/her exploration of the top three career areas went. Following this, the other team members report about the career areas they looked into. With all this in mind, the career seeker and his/her team consider whether they are at a point where an initial career goal can be identified. If not, a plan for more career exploration is made. If an initial career goal can be identified, and the team feels comfortable that this fits with the career seeker's profile and preferences, then the meeting shifts to focusing on identifying job opportunities that fit with this career choice.

After a review of the progress on the benefits analysis is shared, the nuts & bolts of an initial job opportunity are explored, including things like the desired days, hours, pay and benefits, as well as the general area where the person would like

to work. With these basic preferences in mind, a brainstorming process is undertaken to identify the various job opportunities that would fit with the career seeker's career goal and employment preferences identified thus far. Then, the career seeker (with the help of the team) sizes up the list of brainstormed job possibilities and identifies the top three job possibilities s/he would like to actively explore with the help of the Employment Specialist. Tips for what to do, if making this decision is difficult, are included in the outline.

The action planning part of the second meeting has to do with developing ideas and strategies for how exploration of these job possibilities can be done. The work experience option, discussed as one strategy for career exploration, is the most useful strategy to use when assisting career seekers to explore particular jobs within a chosen career area. Job shadowing, prior to work experience, can also be helpful, especially when the career seeker has absolutely no information about what is involved in holding a particular type of job. As with the first career planning meeting, keep in mind that the goal of developing ideas and strategies with the career planning team is to make maximum use of the knowledge and connections of all team members, so that career exploration can

be facilitated by natural connections that team members may have to share. By asking career planning team members for their ideas about how job exploration can be facilitated, you will tap into their knowledge and connections, which may ultimately make the work of arranging work experiences or job shadowing much easier.



Following the outline for this second career planning meeting that can be found in Appendix C., a description is again included that lists the roles that the career seeker plays in the second career planning meeting.

Recall that defining these roles explicitly ensures the career seeker has a key part in the meeting, and lessens the likelihood the meeting goes on with the career seeker having only passive involvement in the process. Also remember that this list is not meant to be a limiting one. In other words, career seekers can play many more roles than are listed; but to ensure their involvement, they should play no less of a role than that described.

Again, care should be taken in writing up a meeting summary and action plan for everyone who attended. It is most important to be thorough and accurate, rather than brief. Brief notes often lose the meaning and detail of what went on - precisely the things we want to hold onto! It's a good idea to write down the details, so that everyone sees the process of the meeting represented in the notes. Remember to maximize accessibility when recording information.

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**The work experience option ...
is the most useful strategy to use
when assisting career seekers to
explore particular jobs within a
chosen career area.**
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Focused exploration of specific jobs within the chosen career area is undertaken.

9 In a less broad, more focused repeat of the career exploration activities, the Employment Specialist will be assisting the career seeker to put his/her plan for job exploration into action. This will involve mainly work experience in the jobs the career seeker has selected during his/her second career planning meeting. For guidance on arranging and facilitating work experiences, turn to the chapter on career exploration in Part 3. of this manual. The purpose of these work experiences, however, is different than for those undertaken during the career exploration phase. Instead of using work experiences to determine a broad career goal, they are now being used to determine what particular employment opportunities the career seeker would like to initially pursue. This makes it more important for the career seeker and the Employment Specialist to understand the particular nature of each job, and the type of training, support and adaptations that might be needed to make the job work.

During the time that the career seekers is exploring specific jobs within his/her chosen career area, the Employment Specialist has a unique opportunity to determine what is needed to make the career seeker successful in the particular job opportunities being tried. The basis for this approach is rooted in self-determination. Instead of evaluating work experiences in terms of whether the career seeker can or cannot do the job in question, the evaluation takes a slightly different focus. First, it is based on the assumption that the career seeker may choose the job as the one s/he most wants to pursue. If this is the case, the question then becomes how we make this job a success for the person. If in the course of the work experience, it seems

the career seeker would struggle with this job, we must consider a variety of ways to tailor the job to the person (Recall the analogy mentioned earlier in this manual about the role of the Employment Specialist being largely akin to that of a tailor or seamstress.). Tailoring might include one or more of the following strategies:

- ◆ *some career seekers may only need on-the-job training and short-term job coaching to be successful in the job;*
- ◆ *some career seekers may need adaptive equipment or assistive technology to be successful in the job;*
- ◆ *some career seekers may need special training or further education (in addition to basic, on-the-job training) to be successful in the job;*
- ◆ *some career seekers may need checklists or step-by-step instruction sheets to be successful in the job;*
- ◆ *some career seekers may need prompts or problem-solving assistance from co-workers;*
- ◆ *some career seekers may need job carving to ensure they can do all parts of the job they are hired for;*
- ◆ *some career seekers may need job creation, that incorporates the skills they have into an identifiable position which employers need and therefore are willing to create;*
- ◆ *some career seekers may need long-term job coaching (job sharing team) to do the job they are hired for.*

In order to assist Employment Specialists to analyze work experiences in a way that will allow them to gain a full understanding of what is required to make the career seeker successful, we have developed a Recipe For Success tool that can be completed on each job being considered. (This tool can be found in Appendix D.)

The main reason for taking this approach is to avoid rejecting job opportunities that the career seeker specifically prefers because we conclude the career seeker cannot do the job successfully. The challenge instead is to provide the right combination of supports or adapt the job in a way that allows the career seeker to be successful. The Recipe for Success tool puts the emphasis on successfully bridging the gap between what career seekers prefer and what career seekers can be successful at. Instead of relying on career seekers to adapt their preferences to our expectations and assessments of their abilities, we instead challenge ourselves to adapt their preferred jobs to fit their abilities.

There are some people who may believe that significant adaptations to existing jobs or worksites are unrealistic and therefore not worth identifying or pursuing. They may say that work experiences and attempted placements should be based only on what we know about people's existing skills and capacity for training, and that preferences should only come into this where they happen to overlap with skill areas or areas of trainability. The prevalence of this attitude may in part explain why so many people with developmental disabilities are placed in the same sorts of jobs (cleaning, fast food, etc.), despite the vast differences between people. In reality, there are very few people with developmental disabilities (in fact, very few people period) who hold community jobs that are not bene-

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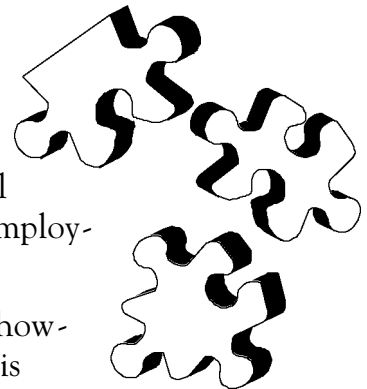
... mainstream examples of job adaptation or carving include job shares, home-based work and flex-time. If we equate these "adaptations" to those we might recommend for a person with a developmental disability, there may be every chance that an employer will consider it.

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fitting from some form of job adaptation or carving. Once employers understand how this strategy works, they are open to doing it because it secures them loyal, dependable workers. Popular mainstream examples of job adaptation or carving include: job shares; home-based workers;

and flex-time. If we equate these "adaptations" to those we might recommend for a person with developmental disability, there may be every chance that an employer will consider it. To dismiss the possibility without exploring it is to dramatically reduce people's opportunities to find successful and rewarding employment.

This issue aside however, the reality is that each time we analyze a work experience in this way, we will learn more and more about what a career seeker needs to be successful, and this will aid us in future identification of work experiences or job opportunities. Each time the Recipe for Success tool is used, we should be able to sit down with the career seeker and increase both the accuracy and the detail of our understanding about the vision for an ideal job, which was developed during the second career planning meeting. The more we develop this vision, the more honed our future job development work will be, and the



more likely we will find success in our efforts. From this perspective, no work experience or job trial is wasted simply because a permanent offer of employment may not result.

10 Third Career Planning Meeting takes place.

The main goals of the third career planning meeting are:

- ◆ *To establish a more detailed and accurate understanding of the career seeker's vision for an ideal job, based on the job exploration undertaken since the second career planning meeting, and the results of the Recipe For Success tool.*
- ◆ *To identify and rank up to six initial job possibilities that the career seeker would find acceptable and which fit with his/her chosen career goal.*
- ◆ *To create a plan for job development that will allow the career seeker to secure one of the six identified job possibilities.*

(An outline for the third planning meeting can be found in Appendix C. of this manual.) The third career planning meeting begins by recapping the initial career goal and the nuts & bolts visions for an ideal initial employment opportunity that were previously decided. Then the facilitator should recap the list of brainstormed job opportunities, identified in the second career planning meeting, that were thought to fit with the career seeker's career goal and nuts & bolts preferences identified thus far. In addition, the facilitator should do a quick overview of the action plan that came out of the second meeting. Then, the career seeker is asked to report back on how his/her exploration of the top job opportunities went. The facilitator should then ask the career seeker to identify any of the three

job opportunities s/he would like to eliminate. The Employment Specialist should share the results of the Recipe For Success tool used as part of the exploration of each job opportunity being considered.

With all this in mind, the career seeker and his/her team consider whether they are at a point where a ranked list of up to six initial employment goals can be identified. Although only three job possibilities will have been explored, the list of up to six potential employment goals comes from considering how variations on each of the jobs explored might also be likely (maybe even more likely) to be a successful match for the career seeker and his/her preferences. The variations are discovered through considering the results of the Recipe For Success tool.

However, if no initial employment goals can be chosen, a plan for more job exploration is made.

If initial employment goals can be identified, and the team feels comfortable that these fit with the career seeker's profile and preferences, then the meeting shifts to focusing on making a job development plan that will allow the career seeker to secure the top-ranked job/employment goal. The work includes setting a target date by which it is expected the person

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meaning and
detail of what
went on.**
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will start his/her new employment. If there is time, strategies can be developed for reaching the other initial employment goals that weren't ranked as number one.

When the meeting ends, it is made clear that if problems develop, the team can be called together to help with this.

Otherwise, a time is set for the 1st follow-up meeting, about a month after the career seeker is expected to start the new employment. The first follow-up meeting should evaluate the job/employment opportunity, and create a long-range tentative plan for taking additional steps toward the career goal set. We can't stress enough that creating this long-range vision for how the career seeker could move on in his/her career area, after s/he has secured a first job, is absolutely vital for making this career planning process live up to its purpose: to ensure that the process does not stop with initial job placement. Creating this vision tells the career seeker and everyone on his/her team that this first job represents a starting point, not the end of the line!

Following the outline for this third career planning meeting that can be found in Appendix C., a description is again included that lists the roles that the career seeker plays in this career planning meeting. Recall that defining these roles explicitly ensures the career seeker has a key part in the meeting, and lessens the likelihood the meeting goes on with the career seeker having only passive involvement in the process. Also remember that this list is not meant to be a limiting one. In other words, career seekers can play many more roles than are listed; but to ensure their involvement, they should play no less of a role than that described. Again, care should

be taken in writing up a meeting summary and action plan for everyone who attended. It is most important to be thorough and accurate, rather than brief. Brief notes often lose the meaning and detail of what went on - precisely the things we want to hold onto! It's a good idea to write down the details, so that everyone sees the process of the meeting represented in the notes. Remember to maximize accessibility when recording information.

11 Job development, creation, carving or self-employment opportunities are pursued.

Once the career seeker has identified the list of initial employment opportunities that both fit with his/her chosen career goal and that s/he wants to pursue, the Employment Specialist becomes involved in job development, and where necessary, job creation, job carving, or setting up self-employment opportunities in order to ensure the career seeker secures employment in his/her chosen career area.

Rather than write extensively here on job development strategies, we refer you now to Part 3. of the manual where a separate chapter on this subject can be found.

The strategies described in this chapter are tried and tested approaches to job development that are generally accepted as good practice throughout the field of supported employment.

When in the process of developing employment opportunities for the career seeker, continue to utilize the tools and resources you have at your disposal. You can call additional Career Planning Team meetings as needed to get guidance, advice or assistance from team members on job development and placement

strategies. You can utilize your community map, look back on the career seeker's Career Planning Workbook, use the Business Advisory Group if your agency has one, and continue to use the Recipe for Success tool to help with talking to employers about tailoring jobs to fit the career seeker. Most importantly of all, keep in mind what national experience in supported employment has shown are the key ingredients to successful supported employment outcomes:

- ◆ *having a positive attitude towards persons with developmental disabilities*
- ◆ *including family members and agencies in the job search effort*
- ◆ *providing opportunities for job tryouts*
- ◆ *involvement of the employer community*
- ◆ *effective marketing by filling an employer's human resource need*
- ◆ *changing public and employer perceptions of abilities*
- ◆ *planning for long term support and building "natural supports"*

(source: www.hhs.gov/progorg/ocil)

12 Initial employment is secured, and a training/on-going support plan put into action.

One of the most important parts of the career planning process that is all too often overlooked is the point at which the career seeker receives an offer of employment. Many times, it is assumed the career seeker will take this job without hesitation. But again, this neither encourages self-determination nor

informed decision-making. In this career planning process, we ask Employment Specialists to set aside time to go through the offer of employment with the career seeker and to assist him/her to reach an informed decision about accepting or rejecting the job offer. To help with this, and to ensure that the career seeker doesn't impulsively accept an employment opportunity that may prove unsuitable, you may find the booklet "Do I Want This Job: A Pocket Guide For Job Seekers Deciding Whether To Accept a

Job Offer" useful to review with him/her.iii (A copy of this guide can be found in the back pocket of this manual's binder.)

Once the career seeker has made the decision to accept a

job offer, a new challenge for the Employment Specialist begins. This challenge involves ensuring the appropriate training and on-going support are available to the career seeker so that the job is a success. In part, this information will come from using the Recipe For Success tool, which will likely have been done when the career seeker was either in a work experience or job trial in this or a similar job. As well, there are many other considerations regarding training and on-going support that the Employment Specialist should consider. We refer you now to Part 3. of this manual, to the chapter on Job Training and On-Going Support. Again, the content of this chapter is based on a great deal of national experience and is considered to be best practice throughout the field of supported employment.

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Although this point marks the end of the job search ... it also marks the inauguration of a new challenge – staying employed.
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13 Career seeker settles into job.

Graduation ceremonies are often called commencement ceremonies. The word commencement signifies the beginning of something, even though most people assume that graduation marks the end of something. In reality, it is both an end and a beginning. The same is true of the time when the career seeker settles into his/her initial employment. Although this point marks the end of the job search and all the work that went into that, this point also marks the inauguration of a new challenge - staying employed. Too little attention has been paid to this in the past and as a result, many "job placements" have ended in the career seeker either losing or quitting his/her job. We have learned that on-going involvement from the Employment Specialist is necessary to ensure neither of these outcomes occurs.

There are two other critical reasons why an Employment Specialist must continue to be closely involved with career seekers who have found initial employment. First, there should always be attention paid to increasing natural supports in the workplace, and in helping people with developmental disabilities develop friendships where possible with co-workers. The field of supported employment was founded on the premise that people with disabilities not only have a right to work, but they also have a right to live and work in their communities, alongside of all other citizens. This commitment to inclusion extends beyond situational, workplace support. As far as possible, relationships with co-workers that can enhance the career seeker's involvement with, and connection to, the wider community should be encouraged. Section

14, which begins on the next page, deals with this topic in more detail.

The second reason, why an Employment Specialist must continue to be closely involved with career seekers who have settled into initial employment, is to ensure that attention is paid to moving each person along his/her chosen career path. This means ensuring that progress toward the career seeker's chosen career goal is reviewed by his/her planning team, and that plans for moving closer to that goal are developed regularly. It is expected that movement along this path should occur at a

reasonable pace, generally consistent with others working in the same career area. The job of the Employment Specialist is a challenging one. It can be all too easy to get people settled into jobs and then put aside their long-term career goals. This often means those long-term goals are forgotten. Step 15, the final step of this career planning process, deals with the vital importance of facilitating career advancement and promotion. This step is discussed as the final section of this part of the manual.

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... if the job training and on-going support strategies are used, the employer and co-workers will already have some role in supporting the career seeker
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14 Natural Support Strategies Tool is used. Plan for increasing natural supports developed and put into action.

The goal in developing natural supports is to create a sense of ordinariness around

the entire employment situation in order to assist the person with a disability to become an integral and active part of the workplace. As mentioned in the previous section, once the career seeker has settled into an initial employment opportunity, one key challenge for Employment Specialists is to increase the role that natural supports play in the person's life, particularly if external job coaching is being used. Hopefully, if the job training and on-going support strategies suggested in this manual are used, the employer and co-workers will already have some role in supporting the career seeker, even if job coaching is initially needed to provide additional support. The challenge for the Employment Specialist then becomes identifying how the support that is being provided by the job coach could be provided by natural supports (co-workers, supervisors) so that no long-term, external support is needed.

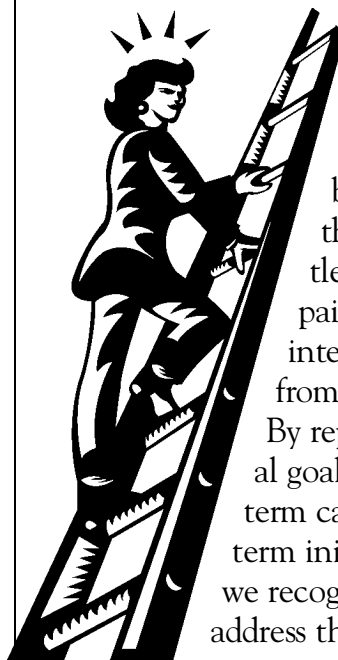
The job coach will be an important source of information for the Employment Specialist in this regard. However, it will likely take a coordinated team effort between the job coach and the Employment Specialist to first identify and then facilitate greater natural supports for the person. Unfortunately there is not a simple "recipe" for developing natural supports since every individual and every employment situation is unique. However, we believe there is a set of basic questions you can ask yourself in the process of considering how greater natural supports can be developed around a specific career seeker.

In order to assist with developing a plan for increasing natural supports, we have created a tool that Employment Specialists and job coaches can use, which is designed to take them through

various considerations that will be helpful in identifying, for a particular supported employee, the need for additional natural supports, as well as potential sources for those additional natural supports. This tool can be found in Appendix D.

15 After 2-3 years, or when opportunity arises, a plan for promotion is developed and put into action.

For this career planning process to truly live up to its name, a critical role of the Employment Specialist must be ensuring that progress toward the career seeker's chosen career goal is reviewed by his/her planning team, and that plans for moving closer to that goal are developed regularly. As we mentioned earlier, it is expected that movement along this path should occur at a reasonable pace, generally consistent with others working in the same career area. It has been the case up to now that little has been written about how Employment Specialists should go about facilitating career advancement and promotion. Because we have so often slipped into the trap of reacting to crises, and this has meant that the



times we helped people find new jobs were largely when they had either been fired or quit their previous jobs, little attention has been paid to planned and intentional movement from one job to another. By replacing the vocational goal with both a long-term career goal and a short-term initial employment goal, we recognize and continue to address the long-term career

goal, even when initial employment has been secured.

Career advancement can occur either via in-house promotion or movement to a new employer and different job. Obviously, there are many reasons why in-house promotion is both more likely to be successful and less likely to create significant transition work for Employment Specialists. Remaining in the same work culture, working at the same location, and having the same co-workers are just some of the reasons why in-house promotion is often preferable to leaving a company for a new job somewhere else. However, it's important to keep in mind that every career seeker's situation is unique and seeking promotion within the company s/he works for may not ultimately be the best option. This is why it is important to call together the career planning team to consider the options of advancement or promotion available to the career seeker. We refer you now to Part 3. of the manual, where you will find a chapter devoted to strategies for developing promotion or advancement opportunities for career seekers who have successfully mastered their current jobs.

Conclusion

Working with people in new ways that emphasize assets and capacities is a significant challenge for all of us, particularly when we are working with people who have a long history of being seen as possessing little potential and many deficits. As well, taking the time to do this planning work in a way that allows for genuine self-determination can often be difficult because our service system is driven by a culture of efficiency which values quantity over quality. But we have learned over and over that what is possible will only be discovered when we take

the time to thoroughly understand who people are, and when we learn with them how they can be most successful in community employment. **Good luck!**

i Reference specific law. Also reference ADA Title that addresses this.

ii The vocational profile work of Marc Gold first emphasized the value of using information that already exists.

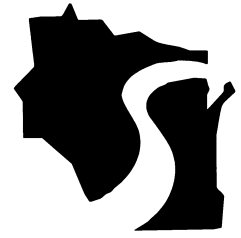
iii" Do I Want This Job, A Pocket Guide For Job Seekers

Deciding Whether To Accept a Job Offer", by Max Carry. Publisher is Training

Resources Network, Inc. ,St. Augustine, Fla.

PATHWAYS TO INDEPENDENCE

*Sharing the Journey: Helping People with
Developmental Disabilities Find & Follow The Career
Path That's Right For Them*



RESOURCE CHAPTERS

Career Exploration

The goal of career exploration is to enable the career seeker to make an informed choice about a broad career area s/he would like to pursue. The choice of career area influences the job opportunities the Employment Specialist will seek or develop on behalf of the career seeker. For example, if someone chooses working with animals as his or her career goal, while a job at McDonalds would not be appropriate, a job at a vet or on a farm would be.

Once the career seeker, with help from his/her Career Planning Team, has identified a few potential career goals, it is important to take the time to ensure that the person has a thorough understanding of what it would actually be like to work in his/her chosen career fields. The employment backgrounds of persons with developmental disabilities are usually very limited so career exploration activities are necessary in order to maximize informed consumer choice. As well, the more time the Employment Specialist spends getting to know and observing a person in a variety of actual work settings, the more likely a good job match can be created, once a career path is decided upon. So there are many reasons to work on career exploration.

In order to help the career seeker clarify a

career goal, and to determine the support needs associated with different types of jobs that fall within that career area, the Employment Specialist can utilize a variety of career exploration activities.

Job Shadowing

Job shadowing provides the career seeker with an opportunity to follow and observe other people working in the types of careers he/she is considering. Some members of the person's Career Planning Team will likely know people working in the chosen career fields and can help "pave the way" for the Employment Specialist to set up job shadowing experiences. It is important to arrange time for the career seeker to talk with the people being shadowed in order to ask questions and to discuss what has been observed. This may also give the career seeker an opportunity to find out about existing job openings in this career area. Job shadows are unpaid and typically limited to a short period of time.

Work Experience

Work experience gives career seekers an opportunity to perform actual work in a career area they are interested in. Not only does a work experience give the Employment Specialist and the employer an opportunity to consider how well the person can perform the job and what additional skills, supports, and adaptations would be necessary to make the job successful, but it also gives the career seeker a chance to decide whether or not

s/he really likes this type of work. When exploring a particular career area, it is important that the career seeker have a chance to try out more than one job that falls within the broad career area. The choice of an initial career goal should be based on more than just the experience of working in one particular job in that career area.

Work experiences are typically paid for by DVR and/or the agency providing vocational services to the individual. The length of each work experience depends upon the individual and upon what is negotiated with the employer. Again, members of the person's Career Planning Team can be very helpful in "opening doors" to work experience opportunities by utilizing their personal and professional contacts.

Some vocational providers ask the employer to evaluate the person's work performance after a specified period of time. It should be explained to the career seeker that work evaluations are routine in most types of employment and are intended to highlight not only what the person is doing well, but also to suggest areas in which the vocational provider could assist the career seeker to improve. During the evaluation, time should also be set aside for the career seeker to ask the employer any unanswered questions s/he may still have about this type of career or any of the specific jobs s/he may have tried. One

good question is: what are the opportunities for promotion in this career area? After the employer has completed his/her evaluation, the Employment Specialist should talk with the career seeker to find out how s/he evaluated the jobs tried and the overall career area.

Mentoring

A mentor is someone who works in the same career area or specific job desired by the career seeker, and who is willing to participate in a career planning meeting(s), to identify other contacts/resources in their field that could be helpful to the person, and to be someone who will spend time helping the career seeker (however the mentor can) to follow his/her chosen career path.

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Sometimes, people who allow career seekers to shadow them might be willing to act as mentors. Other times, family members or friends of the career seeker, who also work in the field of interest, may be willing to act as mentors. Still other times, members of the Career Planning Team will know people they would be willing to introduce to the career seeker and ask to act as a mentor.

Informational Interviews

In this approach, the career seeker meets with employers who are willing to provide information about the "real world" in the career areas which interest the person. The employers can also tell career seekers what they look for in qualified applicants. It is important for the

Employment Specialist to help the career seeker prepare questions for these meetings, as employers usually have a limited amount of time to spend. Asking if the employer if s/he has any staff available to give a tour of his/her business after or before the informational interview would also be a good way to learn about the career area.

Business Advisory Group

Many vocational agencies meet regularly with a group of business people, representing a wide variety of careers, who are willing to: offer advice on how people with disabilities can become qualified applicants for different jobs; offer job shadowing and work experience opportunities at their companies; provide personal contacts which may be useful in career exploration activities; participate in mock interviews with career seekers; etc. A Business Advisory Group can be asked to offer advice and assistance to a variety of career seekers. A Business Advisory Group is different from a Career Planning Team, which is dedicated to helping a particular career seeker reach his/her employment goals. To tap into a Business Advisory Group, find out when and where they meet, and then ask to be added to an upcoming meeting agenda.

Vocational Evaluation

In addition to other career exploration activities, a career seeker may also benefit from formal testing by a vocational evaluator authorized by DVR. There is also a variety of career exploration software, some designed especially for use with and by people with developmental disabilities, which can be found at employment or career development centers.

It's important to keep in mind that any sort of testing offers important informa-

tion but is not a substitute for real-life, first-hand experiences of different jobs and careers. Therefore, vocational testing should be used to complement, not substitute for, job shadowing and work experience.

Setting Career Goals

In this career planning process, the career seeker decides on an initial career goal after spending time exploring at least three career areas that match his/her interests, skills and preferences. The Career Planning Team helps the career seeker and his/her Employment Specialist decide what career areas to explore and how this can best be done. Then the Career Planning Team meets again with the career seeker to help him/her make a final decision about the career area to be pursued. Some people may wonder what to do if, after using the strategies discussed in this section to help the career seeker make an informed choice about a career goal, the person chooses a goal that does not appear feasible, given his/her abilities, education, employment history or the local job market. Instead of steering people away from their career goals, here are two things the Employment Specialist can do:

◆ *Discover the key elements of the career that the participant finds attractive and look for other careers that fit better with the who the person is, or what the local job market is, where those elements also exist. For example, Rita has always dreamed of being a police officer but does not have all the necessary skills, and it's not likely she can develop them with training. After some investigation the Employment Consultant finds that Rita likes the idea of wearing a uniform and a badge. The Employment Consultant may arrange a work experience as a tour guide, wearing a uniform and*

badge, as a trial for Rita to see if she would enjoy it and to determine Rita's ability to be successful." (This example taken from "Vocational Futures Planning" by Juneau Works Work Initiatives Project, Juneau, Alaska.)

◆ Explore the career area in greater depth to find all of the jobs that fall into that broad career area. Through this process, discover jobs that fit with who the person is or that are available in the local job market. For example, Jason says he wants a career as an airline pilot. Jason spends an afternoon visiting an airport and seeing what pilots do. He takes one look into the cockpit and decides this is not the job for him. Instead of giving up on his career goal, Jason and his Employment Specialist could start looking around at all the other jobs there are with the airlines. His Employment Specialist could see which of these jobs matches Jason's interests and skills, and then arrange for Jason to shadow people doing those jobs to see how he likes them.

We feel very strongly that much of what is fun and satisfying about working in supported employment is the challenge of making people's aspirations work out successfully in reality. It is the responsibility of the Employment Specialist and the person's Career Planning Team to figure out how to find or create a suitable employment opportunity for the person, within his/her chosen career area. In order to support self-determination, we must commit ourselves to working with the goals that people set and finding a way for the people we support to find success in pursuing those goals. The Employment Specialist should think of him/herself as a seamstress or tailor, trying to make the person's chosen dress or suit fit, rather than simply asking him/her to choose another one. In supporting self-determination, the question is how

we help someone achieve his/her chosen career goal, not whether or not we should try. And many of us have learned from experience that in order for people to stay in the employment we help them find, they must not only be good at the job, they must also enjoy the job.

Working creatively to help people find employment that is consistent with the career goals they set will not only enhance self-determination, but it will reduce the frequency of people quitting the jobs they have found.

Conclusion

While Career Exploration Activities can be time consuming, this crucial component of the Career

Planning Process actually saves time and energy in the long run. When career seekers take time and use real experiences to make choices about specific career areas that truly match their interests and abilities, it is more likely the jobs they get will be something they truly enjoy. In turn, this will make it more likely that career seekers will stay in their jobs, rather than quitting because of boredom or frustration. These outcomes contribute to their own success and future employability, as well as the success of the supported employment movement. As well, this sets the stage for career seekers to leave jobs in a planful way, and for positive reasons (promotion), rather than in a way that forces vocational providers to operate in a crisis manage-

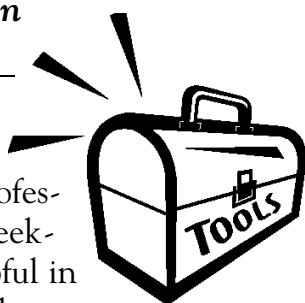
◆ ◆ ◆
In supporting self-determination, the question is how we help someone achieve his/her chosen career goal, not whether or not we should try.
◆ ◆ ◆

ment, failure minimization, mode.

During the course of career exploration, employment networks will be developed which can be utilized when work on locating or creating specific jobs begins. Job sites and employers that have been used for job shadowing and work experiences are often a good starting places for job development, as these employers have already met the career seeker and have an understanding of their capabilities and interests. The next chapter deals specifically with the subject of job development.

Career Exploration Tools

The following are some tools which other vocational professionals and career seekers have found helpful in evaluating potential career choices during the career exploration phase of the process. It is important to collect information during career exploration activities and to share this information with the career planning team so that they can assist the career seeker to make a final decision regarding career goals.



Job Shadowing and Informational Interviews - We have included a "Job Shadow Evaluation" form used by students at Richland Center High School. You and the career seeker may use or adapt this form to help evaluate different careers while doing job shadowing or informational interviewing.

Work Experiences - Community Industries in Stevens Point has developed a comprehensive information sheet on how to explain/negotiate a work experience with an employer. Please refer to

both sides of the "Work Experience" page.

Community Industries uses their "Work Experience Agreement" to clarify roles and responsibilities of the employer and the supported employment provider before entering into a work experience. We suggest that your agency develops a similar agreement.

Community Industries also provides the employer with a "Work Experience Evaluation" form to use when evaluating the career seeker's performance during the work experience. If employers do not have their own evaluation form which they prefer to use you may provide them with one similar to this.

A Note on Reporting Back to the Career Planning Team on Career Exploration Activities

One of the key differences between the Career Planning Process and "business as usual" is that career exploration activities are not meant to focus on an assessment of a person's abilities; but rather their interests. It is during various job try-outs, after a long-term career goal has been chosen, that the Employment Specialist assesses how well the person can perform a specific job and what additional training, supports and adaptations would be necessary, should the person decide he/she likes this type of work and wants to pursue it as an initial step toward his/her chosen career goal.

Job Development

In June, 2000, The Office of The Inspector General of the US Department of Health and Human Services issued a report on the results of a nationwide study conducted to determine which activities are most important in creating jobs and obtaining success in employment programs for persons with developmental disabilities. This Career Planning Process incorporates those activities, including those that pertain to job development. Valued activities include:

- ◆ *having a positive attitude towards persons with developmental disabilities*
- ◆ *basing job choices on personal interests*
- ◆ *including family members and agencies in the job search effort*
- ◆ *providing opportunities for job tryouts*
- ◆ *involvement of the employer community*
- ◆ *effective marketing by filling an employer's human resource need*
- ◆ *changing public and employer perceptions of abilities*
- ◆ *planning for long term support and building "natural supports"*

(source: www.hhs.gov/progorg/ocil)

In the job development phase of this career planning process, the career seeker is encouraged, to the greatest extent possible, to direct the job development process with support and assistance from the Employment Specialist and his/her Career Planning Team. The second career planning meeting creates the opportunity for the career seeker to take this sort of leadership. However, the Employment Specialist has a critical role to play in developing real job offers for the career seeker, which are consistent with his/her chosen career area. Therefore, your skills in relating to the

business world in a professional manner, and developing job opportunities from this, are a vitally important part of the Career Planning Process.

Finding Employers To Approach

Even though you, as the Employment Specialist, have a vital role to play in the job development phase, finding leads for possible job offers should not be entirely the responsibility of the Employment Specialist. Both the career seeker and members of his/her Career Planning Team are expected to contribute to identifying and developing job opportunities. The career seeker has his/her own ties to the community that may yield job opportunities. Take time to review the Career Planning Workbook to see what connections the career seeker may have. As well, each person on the Career Planning Team has ties to different groups of individuals in the community: relatives, friends, neighbors, business colleagues, co-workers, community business owners, and others. Make sure you encourage them to share their ties and connections as part of the career planning meetings. Ideally, you should contact career planning team members between career planning meetings to secure additional advice and information. Keep in mind that every social and business tie of the career seeker, and of each member of the Career Planning Team, represents a potential source of employment for the person.

In general, most people without disabilities find their jobs through social connections. Because people with disabilities tend to have smaller social networks, career planning team members' contacts and networks are vitally important to career seekers with disabilities. Parents in particular may be an untapped resource and may have a wealth of knowledge and

personal contacts regarding employment opportunities as they may have lived and worked in the community for years.

An article entitled “The Business Approach To Job Development” in the Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation (Vol. 10, No.1, 1998) discusses the effectiveness of cold calls vs. referrals in job development. Authors Williams, Petty, and Verstegen explain that the cold call approach is termed “cold” because the business is either not expecting a contact regarding hiring or, if advertising for an opening, has no relationship with the job developer. In contrast, job developers contacts should look to use people mutually known by the job developer/career seeker and employer. These people are known as “referrals”.

In the referral approach, a connected third party (e.g. a career planning team member or another person who has a relationship with both the career seeker or yourself, and an employer) contacts employers on behalf of a career seeker or job developer, and encourages them to meet with the career seeker and/or job developer. This process helps pave the way for job developers to learn more about a business and provides a more “warm” contact because the mutually known party acts as a “social bridge”. Additional benefits of this approach include added credibility for the job developer and greater access to decision makers in the business.

The authors/researchers studied both of these approaches for six months as used by four agencies with a history of successful job development and found:

- ◆ *an average of seven businesses must be contacted through cold calls to achieve one hiring (an average cold call success ratio of 14% across all four agencies);*

- ◆ *to achieve a hiring using the referral approach took an average of less than two contacts (an average success ratio of 78%).*

As part of the career planning process, once the career planning meetings have resulted in a clear description of the types of jobs desired by the career seeker, members of the career planning team should personally contact any potential employers in their personal networks to request that they meet with the Employment Specialist. Encouraging career planning team members to make these calls may prove to be the most critical work you can do for a career seeker. Although you may feel like you are “imposing” on career planning team members by asking them to involve their personal contacts, they are only being asked to smooth the way for you to do your job. Usually, the fact that they care about the career seeker will be enough to make them willing to act. Not only does using the personal connections of career planning team members make it more likely the person will find employment, it also can mean that co-workers will be more supportive because a personal connection is established from the beginning.

During the career exploration phase of the process, you will also have established an additional network of employers through the arrangement (most effectively done through referrals as well) of informational interviews, job shadowing and work experiences, as well as through contact with the business advisory group. If all of these employers currently have no suitable job openings, they can also be asked to make personal referrals to business colleagues on the career seeker’s behalf. As well, make sure you use the community map you developed, which

will contain much vital information related to the particular area where the career seeker lives. Sharing this map with members of the career planning team can help you identify connections that team members may have to these business or employment opportunities, so that you can ask them to act as a “social bridge” to secure a meeting for you and/or the career seeker.

Approaching Employers and Creating Real Job Offers

Once members of the career planning team have made initial contacts with potential employers by utilizing their personal networks, you — as the Employment Specialist — will need to use your professional skills and expertise to:

1 Set up an appointment with each prospective employer to do an analysis of the employer’s needs, and (if the employer’s needs match what the career seeker is looking for) present the benefits of hiring the career seeker and set up an initial interview for the career seeker.

2 Help the career seeker to prepare a resume and to get ready for interviews.

Remember, members of the Career Planning

Team or the Business Advisory Group can help with mock interviews in order to help the career seeker improve his/her interviewing skills and feel more at ease at actual interviews.

Sometimes, the employer will express interest in hiring the career seeker, but will have no immediate openings for the career seeker. In this case, job creation and job carving strategies can be used.

Job Creation and Job Carving as Strategies for Success

If you visit a potential employer and feel strongly about this employer being a good fit for the career seeker, but there are no jobs available that seem to fit well with the career seeker’s skills and interests, you can offer to spend time in a business exploring opportunities for job creation or job carving. You may need to do this quite often as many career seekers with developmental disabilities will be unable to fill existing positions which are open in the job market and will need to have a job specifically designed to fit their skills and preferences. Unfortunately, most employers only have pre-established job positions and are unaccustomed to designing a job around a specific person. The Employment Specialist’s willingness to work in this creative way with a potential employer can overcome a huge barrier to employment for the career seeker with a disability.

According to DiLeo and Hagner, one way to convince an employer to allow you to spend time actually observing the operation



of the business, in order to develop an employment opportunity for the career seeker that also meets the needs of the

employer, is to ask the employer some questions that will raise his/her awareness of how job creation or job carving could help the business:

- ◆ *Do you have any tasks that many employees do that could be done more efficiently as a separate job?*
- ◆ *Do employees have duties that take time away from their main areas of expertise?*
- ◆ *Are there tasks that you would like to see done more often or that are not being done at all at the present time?*

- ◆ *Are there busy times of the day or week when you could use extra help?*
- ◆ *Do you routinely pay for overtime work or temporary work services?*
- ◆ *Do you have a problem with any aspect of your production being behind schedule or employees you feel are overburdened?*
(Supported Employment Infolines, Job Development Tip, September, 1997)

DiLeo and Hagner encourage Employment Specialists to remember that “hardly any jobs are as fixed as they look...if you observe carefully over time, you’ll see changes in the structure of various jobs and the responsibilities attached to various positions.” DiLeo and Hagner suggest that by spending time in a business and analyzing various jobs and responsibilities you will discover:

- ◆ *Some tasks have been added to someone’s job that really don’t fit.*
- ◆ *Some tasks may be left undone.*
- ◆ *Some tasks may be done by whomever can get to them.*
- ◆ *Some people may be working much harder than others.*
- ◆ *Workers may have ongoing disputes over who is responsible for what.*
(Supported Employment Infolines, Job Development Tip, July/August 1997)

If the Employment Specialist feels strongly about a particular employer being a good fit for the career seeker, the Employment Specialist can offer to spend time in a business to study these kinds of problems for an employer. The Employment Specialist then “carves out” tasks based on the career seeker’s skills and preferences in order to improve efficiency for the employer and to create a job for the career seeker.

◆ ◆ ◆

DiLeo and Hagner encourage Employment Specialists to remember ... “hardly any jobs are as fixed as they look...if you observe carefully over time, you’ll see changes in the structure of various jobs and the responsibilities attached to various positions.”

◆ ◆ ◆

Cautions Regarding Job Carving

- ◆ *Remember that not all persons with developmental disabilities “enjoy boring, repetitive tasks that no-one else likes to do”. Boredom is one of the main reasons people with developmental disabilities want to leave their jobs. Job tasks which are carved out for the career seeker should be important and valued in the workplace and based upon the person’s skills and preferences.*
- ◆ *Be careful not to take away tasks from existing employees that they enjoy doing; this could cause resentment towards the person with a disability.*
- ◆ *Make sure the job you create is not isolated and disconnected from other employees.*

Suggested Steps For Job Creation and Job Carving

- 1** Use career planning meetings, career exploration and work experience opportunities to determine the person's preferences, abilities, and support needs.
- 2** Target/contact potential businesses that fit with the career and initial employment goals of the career seeker.
- 3** Get permission from career seeker to pursue a job with these companies.
- 4** Visit each business; explore existing job openings; if necessary, ask the employer job carving questions and get agreement to observe employees performing various tasks.
- 5** Observe employees and get to know the workplace "culture", i.e. formal and informal rules and rituals.
- 6** Carve out potential tasks for the career seeker.
- 7** Analyze tasks, considering carefully the career seeker's interests, abilities, training and support needs.
- 8** Negotiate a job with the employer.
- 9** Act as a resource to the supervisor or co-worker who will train the career seeker.
- 10** Be present when career seeker is trained to ensure the need for natural supports or job coaching is identified and met.
- 11** Fade your presence as the career seeker becomes comfortable in his/her position and the natural supports are effectively engaged.
- 12** Maintain a consultative role with the career seeker's employer, supervisor, and co-workers.

Self Employment as a Strategy for Success

If the career seeker is interested in starting his/her own business, resource people skilled in this area should be consulted and included in Career Planning Team Meetings. Wisconsin's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is also focusing much more on small business development, and DVR staff are developing expertise to enable people with disabilities to successfully develop small business plans. The DVR program is called B.E.S.T. (Business Enterprise Services and Training). The State Department of Commerce has programs/consultants available to assist persons with disabilities to become entrepreneurs. In addition, the State Department of Workforce Development has a small business enterprise program. You should also check out small business associations in your area.

The President's Committee on Employment of People With Disabilities has also made it possible for people with disabilities to explore the many options available for starting their own businesses (including expert resources and financial programs) by establishing a new Small Business Self-Employment Service (SBSES).

Self employment may be attractive to people with disabilities who:

- ◆ *are looking for the freedom, flexibility, and independence of working for oneself*
- ◆ *are looking for relief from disability and access related barriers such as transportation, inaccessible work environments, need for personal assistance, and fatigue.*
- ◆ *want to do a certain kind of work that no employer requires on a full-time basis but a number of employers would require on a part-time basis (e.g. a document shredding service).*

Because starting a business is a major undertaking for anyone, and people with disabilities face additional barriers, it would be wise for the person with a disability and his/her Career Planning Team to investigate all sources of assistance available.

The SBSSES includes links to other entrepreneurship sites, including the Small Business Administration and provides information on a variety of technical assistance resources, as well as resources for writing business plans, financing, and other issues specific to developing a small business. Individual assistance is available toll-free by telephone: (800) 526-7234 or (800) 232-9675 V/TDD.

Ongoing Training On Job Development

As we assist people with disabilities through this Career Planning Process to expand their career preferences, and as we strive to offer people more non-traditional employment opportunities, effective job development presents the biggest challenge. How can we make sure that Employment Specialists have the skills and confidence necessary to make self-determination a reality for people?

The Wisconsin Association For Persons in Supported Employment holds an annual conference, which includes up to date training on job development, job coaching, and a variety of other topics intended to improve the expertise of professionals working in the field of supported employment. WIAPSE members receive a discount to attend. For more information: wiapseconf@hotmail.com.

Steve Tenpas, Madison, WI, at pts@inxpress.net periodically conducts trainings on job development. Contact Steve to receive notice of upcoming trainings.

Innovations Now, Madison, WI, offers a series of trainings on job development. Contact Deidra Hafner at (608) 712-4694 or at djhafner@facstaff.wisc.edu for more information.

The Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute

at the University of Wisconsin-Stout offers an online course on job development as well as several publications on job development. Contact them at (715) 232-1342 or access their website at www.svri.org/trr.htm.



Training Resource Network,

St. Augustine, Florida, offers several publications and resources on job development. Visit their website at www.trn-inc.com.



The National Employment Consortium at Virginia Commonwealth University published a newsletter on job development in Winter, 2000, which we have included here. For more resources like this, contact Dr. Katherine Inge at 804-828-1851 or at kinge@atlas.vcu.edu.

If you know of additional trainings and resources available on job development please contact Holly Fentress at (608)-267-9258 or at fenthrd@dhfs.state.wi.us so we may include them in future editions of this manual.

Job Training & Ongoing Support

Once the career seeker has accepted a job, it is time for the new employee, the employer, and the Employment Specialist to determine together how training and support will be provided, not only to the person with a disability, but also to the employer and co-workers. Because this is a person-centered, consumer driven process, decisions regarding training and ongoing support should be made by the new employee and the employer, with the Employment Specialist serving as a consultant and a facilitator of the process.

The suggestions and ideas that the Employment Specialist contributes should come from discussion with the career seeker and the results of the Recipe for Success tool used during his/her work experiences. Through this groundwork, the Employment Specialist should have determined:

- ◆ *the person's preferred style of learning;*
- ◆ *what kind of supports from supervisors and co-workers are most effective;*
- ◆ *how much support is likely to be needed in the short and long-term;*
- ◆ *what reasonable accommodations might be helpful;*
- ◆ *how well the person is able to communicate and ask for assistance from others in the workplace when needed.*

If supported employment is new to the employer, the Employment Specialist may have to take a more active role in

encouraging the employer to think about the training for this employee in the same way s/he thinks about training any new employee. This will encourage employers and co-workers to take the primary responsibility for welcoming, training and supporting the employee in ways that will make the new hire a success.

Unfortunately, with the inception of supported employment, employers and people with disabilities were taught to rely

on job coaches for nearly all of the job training and ongoing support. While most typical employees rely on their supervisors and co-workers to learn their jobs and help them through their workday, it took those of us in supported employment awhile to recognize that people with disabilities are really no different. We recognize now that we should look to supervisors and co-workers for training and on-going support first, and then only add external

support (like job coaches) to supplement existing natural support when it is necessary.

Dale DiLeo and David Hagner have two useful suggestions for how an Employment Specialist can help facilitate natural supports in the workplace, from the outset:

1 First, as discussions between the new employee and his/her employer turn to job training and support needs, the Employment Specialist should suggest ways to involve co-workers from day one of the person's new job:

◆ ◆ ◆
We recognize now that we should look to supervisors and co-workers for training and on-going support first, and then only add external support (like job coaches) to supplement existing natural support when it is necessary.
◆ ◆ ◆

- ◆ A co-worker can provide orientation to the workplace, teaching the new person the basics and introducing him or her to other employees.
- ◆ Co-workers most familiar with the new employee's job tasks could teach him/her these tasks. The Employment Specialist should act as a consultant to the co-workers regarding the person's learning style and should be there to facilitate communication between the co-workers.
- ◆ If the new employee needs to improve his/her speed or job performance, co-workers may be able to suggest a more efficient process or equipment modification, or they may be able to give the person reminders. Employment Specialists should routinely involve co-workers in solving these issues as they arise.
- ◆ Co-workers can provide emotional support if the new employee is nervous or insecure and they can be there to offer reassurance and support in the event of workplace changes.
- ◆ If the new employee is missing cultural cues about what constitutes acceptable behavior in this particular workplace, co-workers should be encouraged to give straightforward advice and to model appropriate behaviors. If further support is needed, the Employment Specialist can provide consultation and support as needed.
- ◆ Co-workers should be encouraged to intervene on the new employee's behalf if he/she is being unfairly taken advantage of by another co-worker, supervisor or customer.
- ◆ Co-workers can be especially helpful in assisting the new employee to manage his/her time and workload by giving reminders and encouraging the person to stay focused on the work s/he must get done that day. Rather than adding a job coach to provide this support, the Employment Specialist should look to nearby co-workers first.

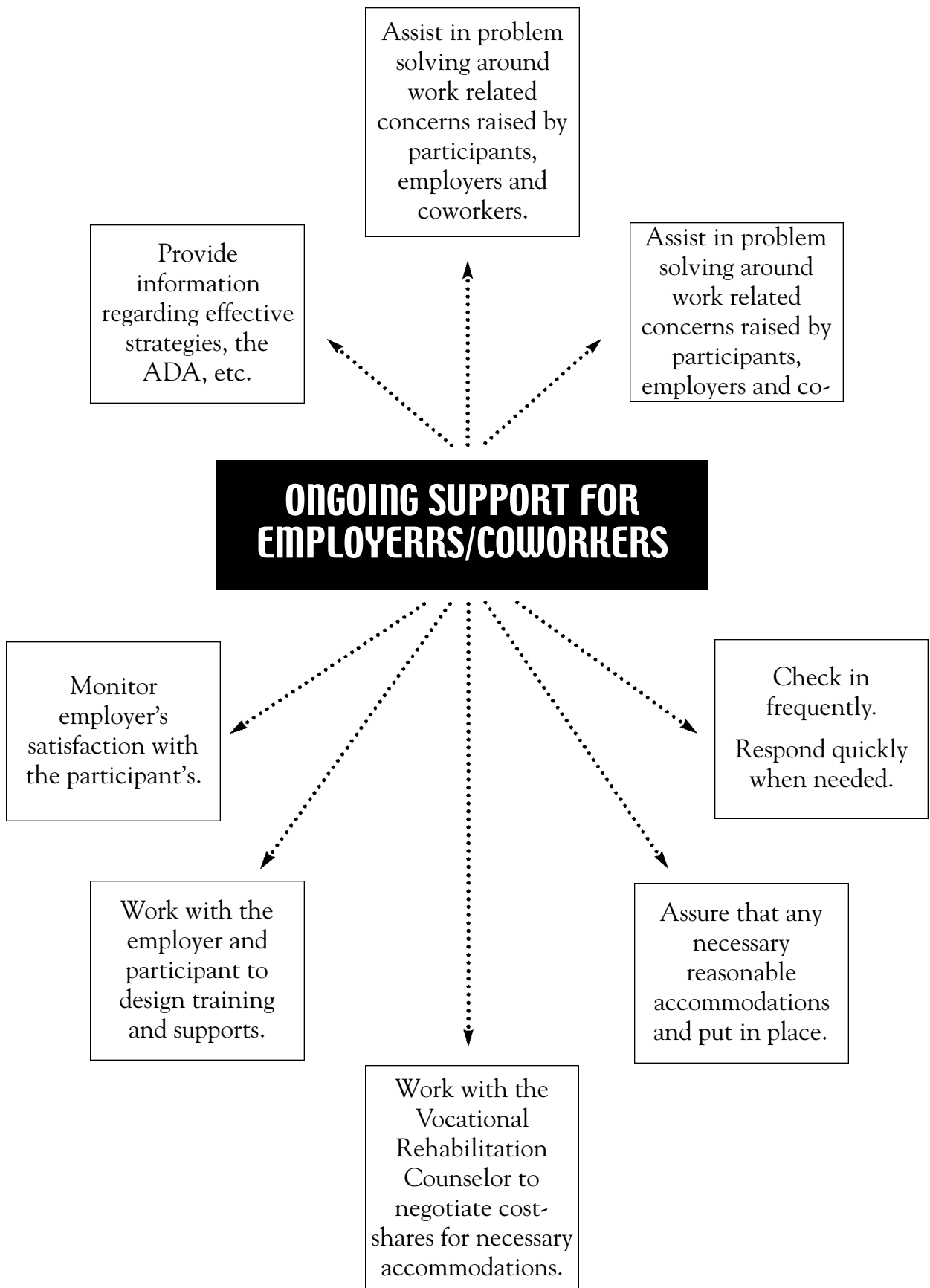
2 Second, the Employment Specialist also needs to help the new employee think of ways that he/she can help co-workers, rather than just being the recipient of help from co-workers. Often times, a **gesture of thanks** when a co-worker takes the time to offer help, will make a big difference in co-worker loyalty. Other times, asking directly about what co-workers could use help with will demonstrate the employee's commitment to reciprocity.

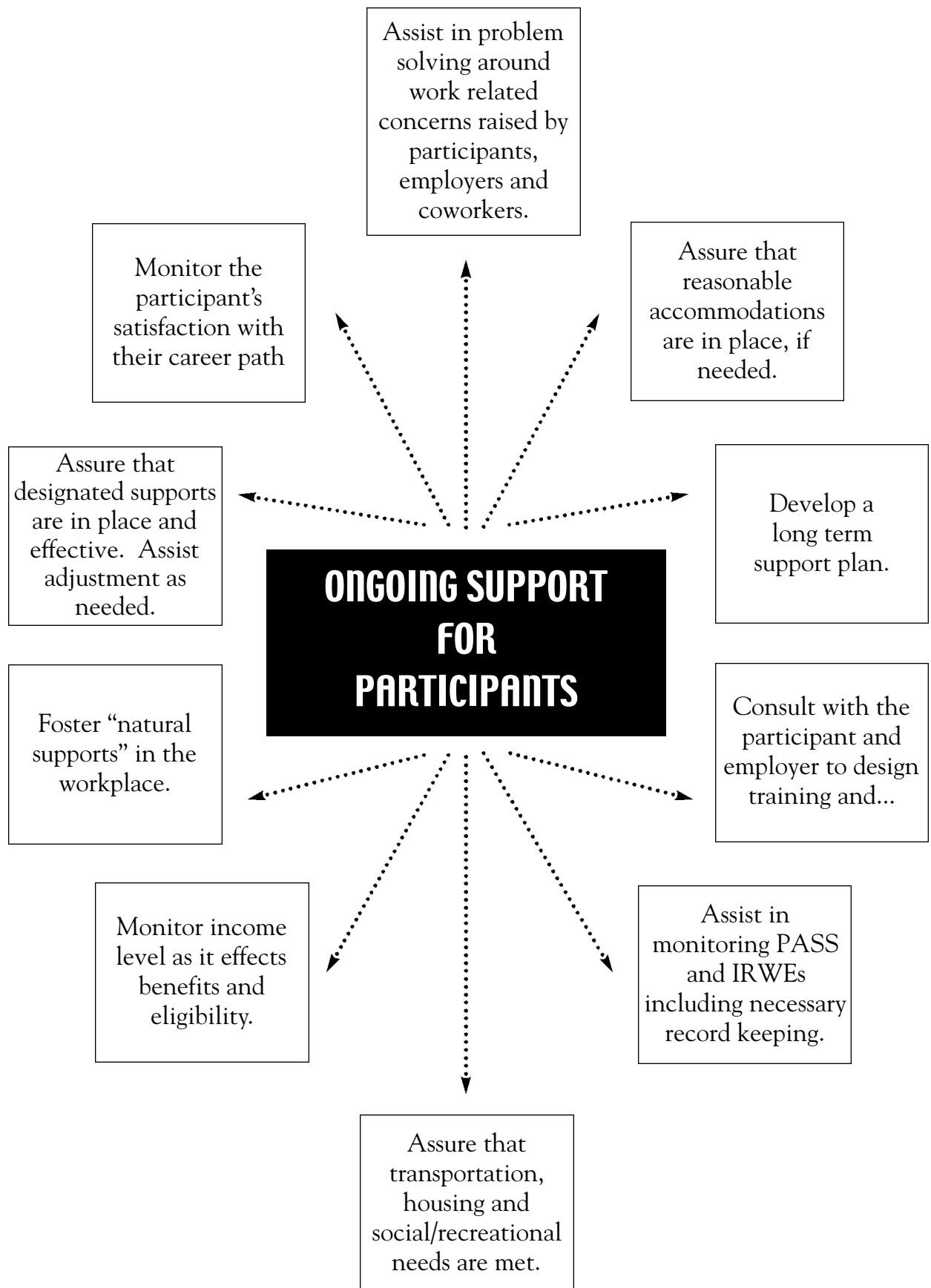


On-Going Support

The purpose of ongoing support is not only to help the person maintain his/her employment, but also to monitor both employee and employer satisfaction, and to assist with career growth and advancement.

We have included two pages next which list areas of ongoing support that Employment Specialists should be certain to address.





Facilitating Career Advancement & Promotion

A career planning process that ended with a single job placement would hardly warrant its name. For all of us, any employment opportunity represents just one step in our career path. In order to assist the career seeker to achieve his/her chosen career goal, and to pursue advancement or promotion at the right times, the Employment Specialist must pay attention to:

- ◆ *Whether the career seeker is getting regular performance evaluations from his/her employer, which include discussion of advancement opportunities;*
- ◆ *If the career seeker is ready to learn and have new responsibilities;*
- ◆ *Whether the career seeker is getting bored with his/her current position;*
- ◆ *How often co-workers doing the same job advance, and into what positions.*

You may find it helpful to periodically use the **“Job Enrichment/ Career Path Development”** questionnaire with the career seeker in order to determine if the job the person is in still satisfies the person and challenges the person, or if it is time to consider taking the next step on the person’s chosen career path. The questionnaire can be found at the end of this section. Copy it as much as you want in order to use it with career seekers.

A federally funded demonstration project in New Hampshire, designed to identify effective approaches to career advancement for individuals with severe disabilities, found the following strategies to be helpful:

Assist Employees To Identify Their Marketable Skills - Once an employee is stable on a job, the Employment Specialist should assist the person to think about exactly what tasks s/he performs, what skills s/he has learned, and what accomplishments s/he has made. It is also important to help the person to recognize his/her personal qualities that are valued by the employer (e.g. dependability and a sense of humor). You may want to talk with the employer about this during the employee evaluation. You may also wish to meet with the employee after a job evaluation to help him/her understand how important such skills and qualities are to career advancement.

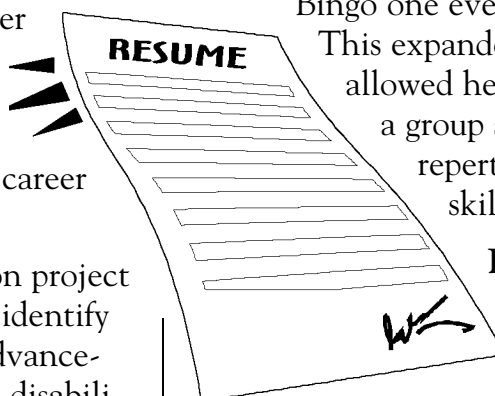
Negotiate Job Promotions and Expansions - The employee may initially have been hired to perform an entry-level, routine job requiring little judgment. After the person is comfortable with his/her regular job responsibilities, the Employment Specialist can suggest to the employer that he/she may want to broaden the employee’s job duties. For example, one young woman in the New Hampshire demonstration project who was working as a housekeeper in a nursing home was assigned to assist with Bingo one evening per week.

This expanded her job, and allowed her to add facilitating a group social activity to her repertoire of marketable skills.

Help Employees To Update Resumes - There are several websites such as

www.10minuteresume.com to

assist in resume development. A successfully employed job applicant always looks



more attractive to an employer than someone who is unemployed, so resumes should be updated regularly as marketable skills increase to ensure that resumes are ready whenever possibilities for promotion opportunities that may occur.

Explore New Job Ideas The Employee May Have - People continually change so the ideal job for someone today may not necessarily be the ideal job for someone tomorrow. One of the New Hampshire project participants who was working at a fast food restaurant would stop doing her assigned work whenever a customer with a baby entered the restaurant and would show a great deal of interest in the baby. This wisely led to exploration of a career change from fast food to child care. It's likely however, that good career planning at the outset would have identified this person's interest in children and pursued that path instead of taking the typical fast food route.

Improve The Employee's Interviewing Skills - It takes practice to learn to make eye contact with an interviewer, to engage in small talk, to state one's experience and qualifications, to know when to shake hands, etc. As a person moves up the career ladder interviewing skills become more and more important.

Encourage Volunteer and Social Activities - This is a good way for the employee to network and to build skills that will help him/her to advance in his/her career. One individual in New Hampshire who was working part-time as a dishwasher volunteered one day per week in the local hospital to perform clerical duties. This was a good way for her to see if clerical work is something she really wants to pursue and to build a record of clerical experience and contacts.

Continue Ongoing Person Centered Planning - The Employment Specialist can help the employee to periodically convene a meeting of his/her career planning team to assist the person to reconsider career goals and/or formulate new plans to change jobs or achieve promotion. Individuals may wish to invite their co-workers or supervisor to a meeting, as these people are likely to be an important source of support to the career seeker.

(Source: *Supported Employment Infolines* (March 2000), authors: David Hagner, Kelly McGahie, and Heidi Cloutier.)

The primary goal for the Employment Specialist is to keep focused on longer-term career goals, even when the people you are assisting have found employment. Promotions within a company are particularly desirable, assuming the person likes the company, because there is not so much change associated with the promotion. However, if a company seems

unwilling or unable to promote someone who has mastered his/her job and is ready to move on, it makes sense for the Employment Specialist to begin to look elsewhere for opportunities. Entry-level positions are just that: a place to enter the world of work. But as far as possible, our work should be focused on helping people move beyond these jobs in order to have genuine opportunities to reach their chosen career goals.



Job Enrichment/Career Path Development Questionnaire

1. Do I like my job? ☐ YES (go to Question 2.)

☐ NO (go to Question 3.)

2. If yes, what do I like most about my job? (For example, the work I do; the place I work; my co-workers; my pay; my benefits; where my work is located; my hours; my boss; etc.)

Even though I like my job, what things would I like to change about it if I could? (For example, the work I do; the place I work; my co-workers; my pay; my benefits; where my work is located; my hours; my boss; etc.)

3. If no, what do I dislike about my job? (For example, the work I do; the place I work; my co-workers; my pay; my benefits; where my work is located; my hours; my boss; etc.)

Even though I don't like my job, is there anything I do like about it that I would want in a new job? (For example, the work I do; the place I work; my co-workers; my pay; my benefits; where my work is located; my hours; my boss; etc.)

4. Why do I stay in this job?

5. My chosen career goal is: _____.

What kind of job should I be looking for next in order to reach this career goal?

6. Am I ready to move on from the job I have now?

☐ YES

☐ NO

7. Would I like to call my career planning team together to help me think about my career goal and moving on from the job I have now?

☐ YES (go to Question 8.)

☐ NO (go to Question 9.)

8. I would like to have another career planning team meeting by:

_____ (date).

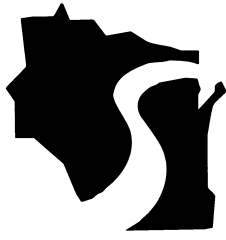
9. Would I like someone else to help me with thinking about my career goal and moving on from the job I have now?

☐ YES

☐ NO

If yes, who? _____

(Adapted from: Ferrell & Bruyere, 1990, *Career Planning Strategies*)



Can I Join Pathways To Independence?

WI Pathways to Independence Developmental Disabilities
Eligibility Determination Form (7/01)

1. Do I live in:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Milwaukee County | <input type="checkbox"/> Kenosha County |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jefferson County | <input type="checkbox"/> Waukesha County |

2. Do I have a developmental disability? A developmental disability is a disability I was born with or became part of who I am before age 21.

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive Disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Epilepsy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cerebral Palsy | <input type="checkbox"/> Autism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prader-Willi Syndrome | <input type="checkbox"/> Brain Injury |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

3. Do I receive:

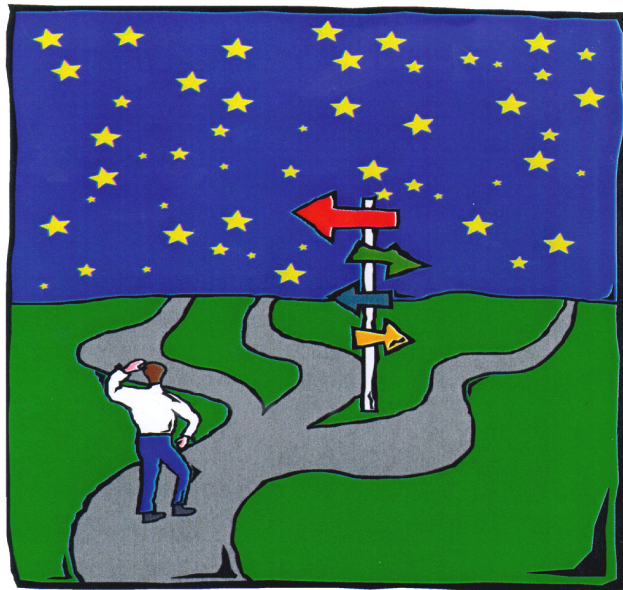
- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> SSI | <input type="checkbox"/> SSDI |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|

4. Is my goal to:

- | |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work more hours than I do now. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Earn more money than I do now. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Get off benefits if I can. |

Wisconsin PATHWAYS TO INDEPENDENCE

CHOOSE YOUR JOB ... *Don't lose your benefits*
KEEP YOUR JOB ... *Keep your low income housing*
LOVE YOUR JOB ... *Get help with transportation*
STAY, SUCCEED, MOVE UP ... *Keep your medical coverage*
REACH YOUR CAREER GOAL ... *Make more money*



REAL JOBS. REAL CAREERS. REAL FREEDOM



Pathways to Independence

Department of Health and Family Services

P.O. Box 1379 • 1 S. Pickney Street, Suite 340 • Madison, WI 53701-1379

A Question For You

Are you out of work or unhappy with the job you have right now?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Do you feel like you have been stuck in the same job for too long?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Do you feel like you've had lots of jobs but you're not really getting anywhere?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Do you want to find work that you really enjoy?

☐ YES

☐ NO

If you answered yes to any of these questions, think about joining **Pathways to Independence**. We call it Pathways for short. Pathways is a new program to help people with disabilities find the careers - not just the jobs — that they really want.

So What's A Career Anyway?

Well, a career is the paid work you do throughout your life. When you go after a career, this means you want more than just a job. You want a job that you enjoy and that is something you choose. But if you want a career, this also means you don't expect to stay in one job forever. With a career, once you've mastered a job, you look to move to a better job and build on the skills you have. When you work in this way, you can build up experience as time passes, and that will mean you can get better jobs at better pay as you get older. This is how people build careers.

If this sounds good to you, then going after a career goal is probably right for you. And you probably understand why having a career goal and a path to achieving that goal is more important than just getting a job.

Reaching your career goal is all about:

- ✓ **Having jobs you enjoy.**
- ✓ **Building skills so you can reach your full potential.**
- ✓ **Getting paid what you are worth.**

What If You Don't Bother With a Career Goal?

Without a career goal, you could end up moving from job to job and always being in entry-level positions because you are hopping around from one area of work to another. Without a career goal, you might also get a job and end up staying in that job forever, even though doing this may not help you grow and reach your full potential. For all of these reasons, choosing a career is a very important decision.

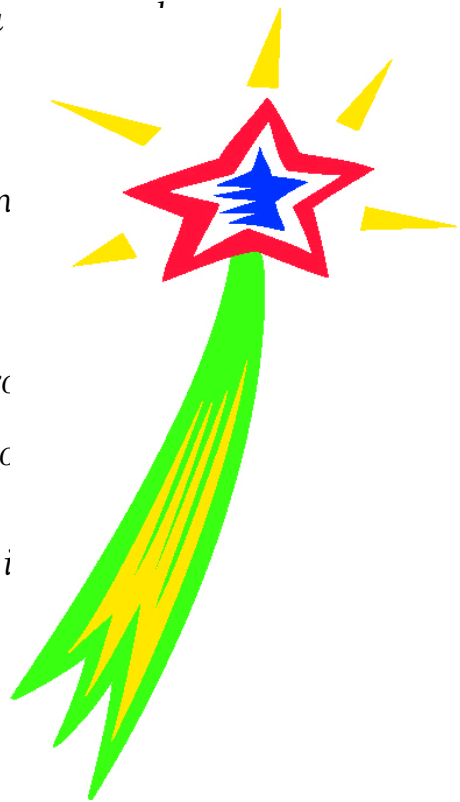
How Does Pathways Help You Reach Your Career Goal?

Pathways staff are here to help you choose your career goal, and then find jobs that help you reach that goal. In helping you, Pathways staff make sure:

- ◆ *You won't be worse off in money terms if you*
- ◆ *You can work and keep on getting health and medical care.*
- ◆ *You can keep getting support services to live in the community.*
- ◆ *You can keep living in your home.*
- ◆ *You can get help with transportation to and from*
- ◆ *You can get help on-the-job from a job coach or personal attendant.*
- ◆ *You can get training or education if you need it to achieve your career goal.*
- ◆ *You can get assistive technology if you need it to do your job.*

And most important of all, we give you help to make sure:

You choose the career and jobs that are right for you!

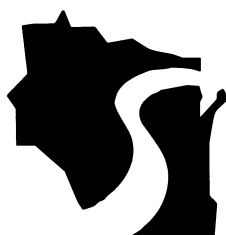


Can You Join Pathways?

If you are a person with a developmental disability, and you are receiving SSI or SSDI, you can apply to join Pathways if there is a Pathways project in your area. Look at the map below to see where the projects are and who to call to get involved.

No Pathways Project in Your Area?

Call your local Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) office to let them know you want to be part of Pathways when it comes to your area. Ask your DVR office to tell you about other help with finding employment that they can give you now.



For More Information on Pathways:

Call **Rick Hall** at Wisconsin DVR:

His phone number is (608) 243-5649.

His toll-free number is 1(800) 442-3477.

His email is HALLRI@dwd.state.wi.us



PERMISSION FOR RELEASE OF RECORDS

My name is _____ (person's name).

I have gotten services from _____ (agency name),

and I understand that they have records about me and about the services I got from them. I understand that I have the power to say whether or not another person can see or get copies of any of my records at

_____ (agency name), and that I can put limits on what records the person can see, and when the person can see them.

By signing this paper, I am using my power to say that I want

_____ to be able to see and get copies of the records at

_____ (agency name) that are on this list:

<u>Type of Records</u>	<u>Dates Covered</u>

I want _____ to be able to see and make copies of my records because _____

_____ may not see or get copies of any records that are not on this list.

_____ may not give copies of the records to anyone else, or talk to anyone else about what is in the records, unless I sign a paper like this that says who else will see the records.

I do not have to sign this paper, and no one can do anything to me if I decide not to. I know that I have a right to see these records myself if I want to see them. My permission that _____ be able to see and get copies of these records is only good from the day I sign this paper until _____. At any time before that, I have the power to say that _____ no longer has my permission to see these records.

I am signing this release on _____ (date)

Signature: _____

Instructions for Explaining and Helping Someone Complete the Release of Information

The most important responsibility of someone, who is assisting the career seeker to read and sign this release of information, is to ensure the person truly understands:

- *the nature of what they are doing;*
- *the specific records being listed on the form and what they are about;*
- *the concept of confidentiality and how it is protected by this release;*
- *the right to withdraw their permission at any time after they sign this release;*
- *that there is no requirement for them to sign this release in order to be involved in the supported employment or Pathways to Independence program they wish to participate in.*

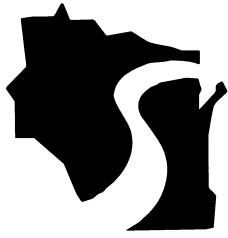
Any release of information is not valid, even if the person signs it, if it was either not explained to him/her, or s/he was coerced into signing the release.

When listing records to be obtained, it is very important you describe each record specifically, and you list the dates to be covered. Without this specific information, this release may not be honored by the agency from whom you are requesting the records.

It is also very important that the reason for the release of information is specifically stated, and that it makes sense in relation to the records being requested.

Finally, if you need to obtain records from more than one agency, the career seeker will have to complete separate releases for each agency. Although this may create more paperwork, this approach will also ensure that the career seeker has a full understanding about the range of agency records that are to be obtained.

This release was drawn up by an attorney and is considered a valid, legal document, which is in compliance with Wisconsin Statutes. If you have any problems with using this release, please contact **Wisconsin Coalition for Advocacy** at (608) 267-0214.



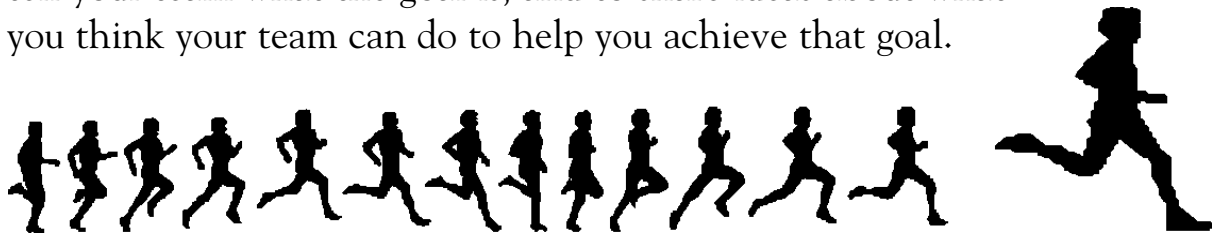
IN PATHWAYS, YOU ARE THE LEADER OF YOUR CAREER PLANNING TEAM!

We need you to take the lead!

Every team has a leader. Team leaders tell the people on their teams what the goal is, and then get their teams to help them achieve that goal.

You are going to have a team of people who want to help you find a career. You are going to be the leader of your team!

Without a leader, a team doesn't know what to do. It will be up to you to tell your team what the goal is, and to share ideas about what you think your team can do to help you achieve that goal.



You probably aren't used to telling people what to do. You are probably used to people telling YOU what to do or doing things for you. Don't worry; you won't be alone.

Your Employment Specialist will be there to help you be the leader of your team.

One of the first things you do in Pathways is decide what career and employment goals you want to set for yourself. One of the best ways to be a good team leader is to keep reminding your team of the career and employment goals you want to achieve.



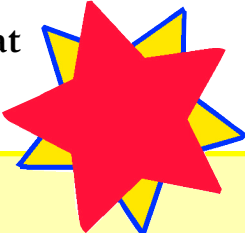
In Pathways, we call your team your "career planning team." Turn over this page to find out more about the role of your career planning team.

Your Career Planning Team

What is a Career Planning Team?

A team is a group of people working together on a goal that they are all interested in.

Your career planning team is a group of people who care about you and who want to work together with you to help you find a career. The people on your team know that you are the team leader. They will be listening to you to find out about your goals and how they can help you.



The people on your team know that you are their team leader.

Three people who will always be on your career planning team are your **Employment Specialist, your DVR Counselor, and your Benefits Specialist.** They are paid to help you find the career and employment you want.

The other people on your career planning team should be **people you choose** because they know you well, they believe in you, and they want you to succeed. They are your allies. Some examples of allies you may want to invite to be on your team are: **family members; friends; teachers; your boss; a coworker; an advocate; or your case manager.**

Your Employment Specialist will help you decide who you want to invite to your meeting. If you are having trouble deciding, use the next two pages to help you think of people that would be good to have on your team.

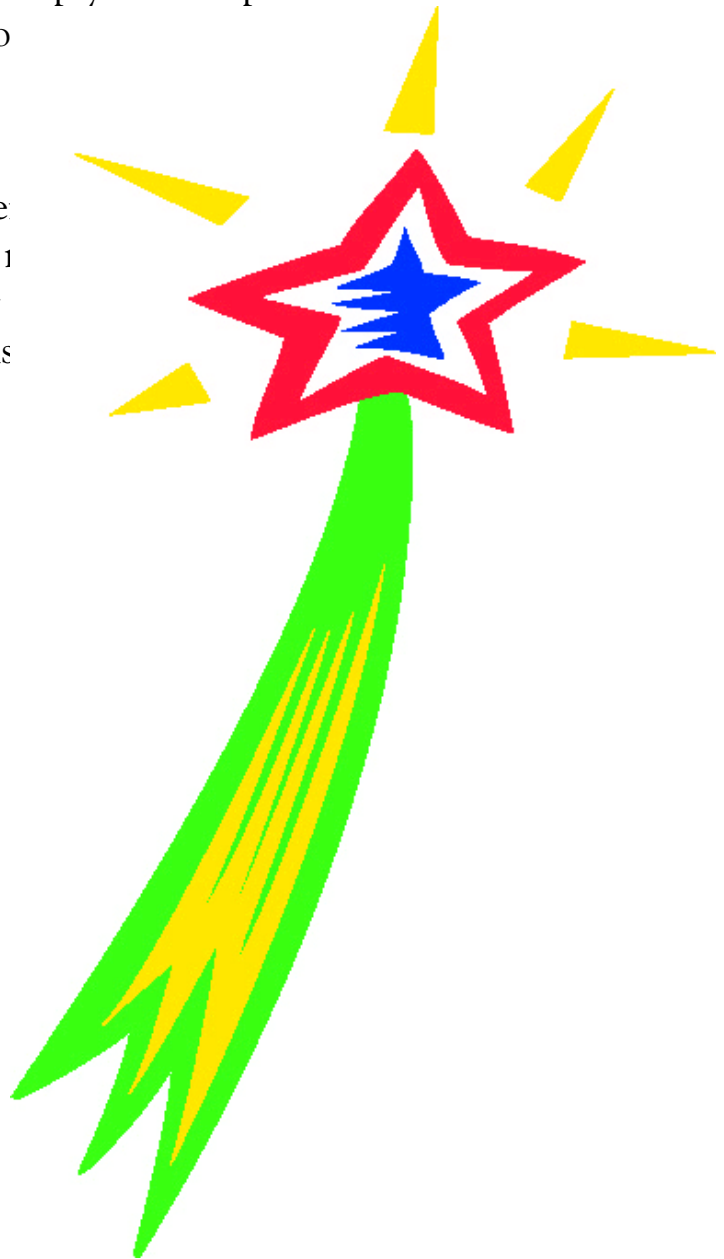
Once you have decided to invite someone to be part of your Career Planning Team, use the Career Planning Team membership sheet (the third page after this one) to write down each person's name and his/her relationship to you. Then, your Employment Specialist will help you fill out a contact information page on each team member so you will know how to contact everyone.



With the help of your career planning team, you will decide

what career and employment goals you want to achieve. Once you have decided on these goals, you might want to invite other people to join your team that would be good at helping you reach your goals. Some people you might want to consider inviting are: bosses that hire people to do the kind of work you want to do; other people that already do the kind of work you want to do; or people that could help you find special equipment to help you do your job some ideas.

Your career planning team members will be there to help you even after you have a job. If you ever need their help, you can have another list or use your Team Membership List to contact them.



Career Planning Team

Case Manager

Employment Specialist
(name)

Family Member
(name)

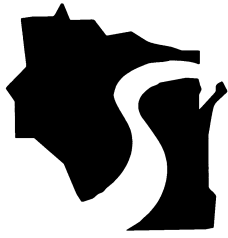
DVR Counselor
(name)

Benefits Specialist
(name)

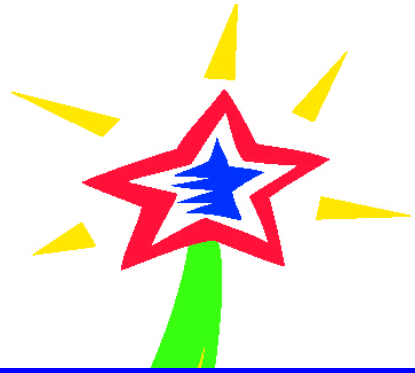
LEADER
(your name)

Teacher
(name)

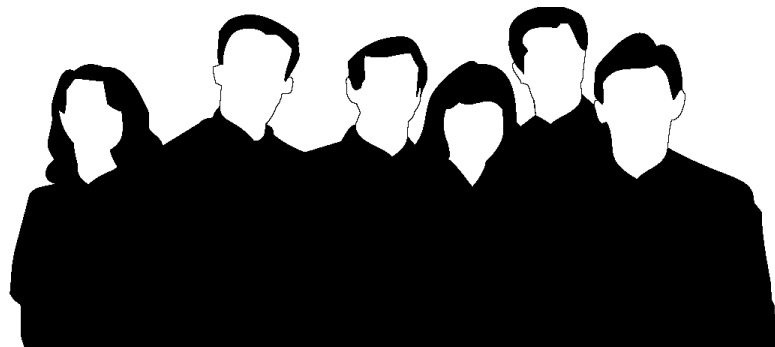
Friend
(name)

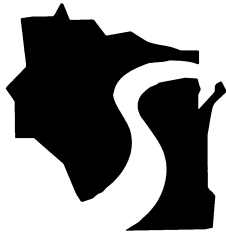


TEAM MEMBERS



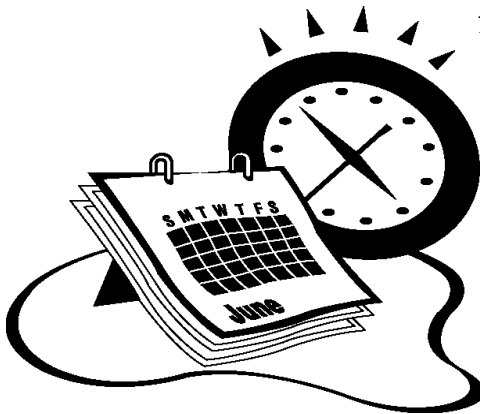
Name:	
Relationship to Career Seeker:	
Job Title:	
Address (home):	
Address (work):	
E-mail Address:	
Fax Number:	
Telephone Number (home):	
Telephone Number (work):	
Best Way to Contact:	





YOUR FIRST CAREER PLANNING MEETING

Your first career planning meeting is a very important step to helping you identify your career and employment goals. Not everyone knows exactly what kind of career or job s/he wants, so this meeting helps you start to figure this out. This meeting is also important because it is the first meeting of your Career Planning Team.



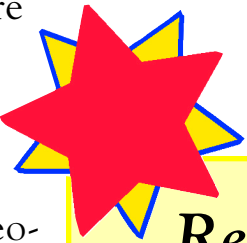
The meeting will last about 2 1/2 hours.

You will be able to **decide where and when you want the meeting to take place**. Once you figure out who you want to be on your career planning team, you will have to think about what day, time and place would suit you and them best.

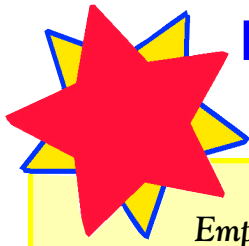
Remember to check your team member contact information pages so you will know where to send the invitations to the meeting, and where to call your team members to remind them of the meeting.

There will be a facilitator for the meeting. This facilitator will get together with you before the meeting, and agree with you how the meeting will work. **The facilitator is not part of your Career Planning Team.** He or she is only there to make sure the meeting goes well and everything on the agenda gets covered before the meeting ends.

Remember, **this is YOUR meeting** and all of the people who are there will have come because YOU invited them. They are all people who care about you and who will work together as a team to help you find the career that's right for you.



**Remember,
this is YOUR
meeting!**



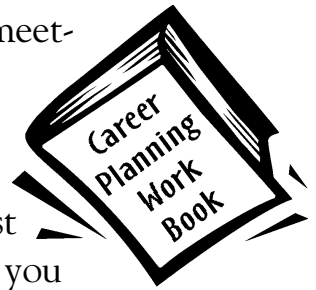
How to make your first Career Planning Meeting a Success

Your Employment Specialist will help you to plan the meeting using the “First Career Planning Meeting Checklist”. (See next page for checklist.)

In order for your Career Planning Team to be able to help you, they will need to know as much as possible about you and what your goals are. The facilitator will make sure you have lots of opportunities to talk, so **it will be very important for you to share what’s on your mind:** things like what you like and don’t like; things you’re good at; jobs you’ve dreamed of doing; and much more.

Since you will be talking a lot at your first career planning meeting, we want you to be prepared! We made a “**Career Planning Workbook**” for you to fill out before the meeting.

It will help you think through many of the things that will be talked about at the meeting. Your Employment Specialist will help you complete the workbook before the meeting so you can make sure everyone there learns as much as they can about you, and what is important to you.



Since some of your Career Planning Team will be people who know you well, **it’s a good idea to listen to what these team members have to say about you and the jobs they think you would be good at.** But remember, **YOU** are in charge of deciding what kind of career you want and how you’d like your team members help you to find it.

Don’t worry, you won’t have to decide at this meeting what your career goal will be. You only need to come up with a few career areas that interest you and that you would like to learn more about.

At the end of the meeting, the facilitator will make sure everyone knows the plan of action. Some or all of the people on your Career Planning Team will have a task to do before the next meeting. You will have careers to look into with your Employment Specialist, and you will also have to get things organized for your second career planning meeting. Remember, you will always have help from your Employment Specialist!

At the end of the meeting, you will probably want to thank everyone for coming and tell them you look forward to seeing them at the next meeting.

ENJOY YOUR MEETING!! It’s the beginning of great things to come!!

WISCONSIN PATHWAYS TO INDEPENDENCE

1st Career Planning Team Meeting Checklist

- ☐ Decide who you want to invite.

(Use your Career Planning Team Membership sheet.)

- ☐ Decide where you want to have your meeting.

- ☐ Decide when you want to have your meeting.

(Pick a day and time that you think people will be able to come. Call some or all of the team to check this out before sending invitations.)

- ☐ Help your Employment Specialist to create an invitation that you like and mail them out.

(Give people plenty of notice. A month may be necessary.)

- ☐ Fill out your Career Planning Workbook so you can discuss it at your meeting.

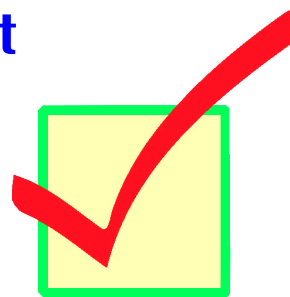
(Page 3 of the Workbook will help you make a plan to do this.)

- ☐ Meet the person who will facilitate the meeting.

- ☐ Call the people you have invited a week before the meeting to remind them to come.

- ☐ Plan refreshments to serve at the meeting.

- ☐ Have “Thank You” notes ready to send out to people after the meeting.



WI Pathways to Independence Developmental Disabilities 1st Career Planning Team Meeting Checklist (7/01)

FIRST CAREER PLANNING MEETING

Overview

Who Should Be There?

1. Career Seeker
2. A few people the career seeker has selected who know the person well and have a positive attitude about the person's potential. (e.g. family member, friend, citizen advocate, long-standing support staff or case manager/broker, teacher, former employer, former co-worker)
3. Employment Specialist
4. Benefits Counselor
5. DVR Counselor

Where and When Should the Meeting Be Held?

Someplace the career seeker is comfortable and familiar with. Community places are ideal for changing the atmosphere from service-dominated to egalitarian consumer-centered. The meeting should be held at a time that allows all invited participants to attend. It's critical that the meeting not be scheduled at a time or held in a place where the support people identified by the career seeker cannot attend.

How Long Should the Meeting Typically Last?

No more than 2 1/2 hours. This should give adequate time to cover the agenda for the meeting and allow everyone involved to participate fully.

Who Should be the Facilitator?

Neutral person, who agrees to meet at least once with and get to know the career seeker before the career planning meeting.

Typical Ground Rules

1. Take turns
2. Listen to each other and ask questions to clarify what people are saying.
3. If you usually talk a lot, talk a little bit less. If you usually say very little, talk a little bit more.
4. Be respectful of each other's ideas, points of view, and information.
5. Keep all things in the room unless there is agreement to share something with someone who wasn't at the meeting.
6. If you say you will do something, follow through.
7. Support one another.

(Most of these ideas taken from: "Using Individual-Centered Planning for Self-Directed Services" developed by Allen Shea and Associates.)

The Agenda

1. Introductions and brief period for people to get to know each other.
2. Facilitator explains purpose of the meeting and the plan for what will happen.
(Filters - employment mindset needed)
3. The career seeker (with help, as needed) shares the information he/she put in the Career Planning Workbook. The facilitator records the information and clarifies as necessary.
4. Person-Centered Discovery Discussion (to complement information from career planning workbook). The facilitator leads a discussion (to build upon that information shared by the career seeker so that the result is a full picture of the career seeker.
5. Brainstorming about career areas the person may be interested in or which seem to fit well with who s/he is. Follow rules of brainstorming...people do individually and then compare lists - see how much agreement there is without consultation. Make up one comprehensive list of all suggestions. After list composed, make a note of why people listed each idea. Ask the person to say if s/he really doesn't like one or more of the suggestions made - then strike those off the list.
6. Break (During this break, the facilitator should organize the brainstormed list, group similar ideas together and make it generally easier for the career seeker to make sense of.)
7. Return to the brainstormed list of career possibilities. Review the list for everyone.

The next challenge is to identify the three top career possibilities that the person wants to explore with the help of the Employment Specialist. If more than 3 career areas are listed (pretty likely!), ask the person to choose the 3 areas s/he thinks are his/her top areas to be explored before the next meeting. If the person finds this hard to do, consider exploring:

- *the 3 career areas that were suggested most often by crew members;*
- *the career areas the person came up with him/herself.*

Sometimes, if there are a lot of career areas listed, we can see commonalities between different career areas and we can group the ideas into a smaller number of broader career areas to explore (e.g. waitress and catering = food service industry). This strategy may also help the career seeker decide on the 3 career areas s/he wants to explore. (The facilitator should have done some of this grouping during the break.)

8. Make a plan, using suggestions from the group, about how exploration of each of the 3 career areas identified might best be accomplished.

If team members know people working in career areas the person wants to explore, ask them to help make it possible for the person to meet with their contacts to learn more about the career area through individual interview, job shadowing or work experiences. Special note: exploring a particular career area should involve more than one activity - particularly, exploring or trying more than one job.

9. Review the other possible careers areas that were suggested.

Develop strategies for finding out information about other career areas on the brainstormed list that don't make the top three.

Maximize the team's community members' involvement in this. For example, have each of them choose one identified career area that is not one of the top three which the person will be exploring with the Employment Specialist. Have them agree to do some basic exploration and find out:

- *what kind of entry level jobs are available in this career area;*
- *where do people start in pursuing a career like this;*
- *who could you meet with or where could you go to learn more about this career choice.*

10. Review of Progress on Benefits Analysis

(*Make a list of what we still need to find out in relation to benefits.)

11. Before the meeting ends, make sure everyone knows who is doing what by reviewing action plans developed in steps 8, 9, 10.

Decide if there is anyone else, given the areas being explored, that should be invited to the next meeting as a resource person. Agree who will assist career seeker to invite new resource members.

Agree date, time and place for next meeting where people will come back with information we needed to find out.

Role of Career Seeker in First Career Planning Meeting

It is vital that the Employment Specialist take the time to help the career seeker prepare for this career planning meeting in advance. The career seeker should feel free and able to participate in every aspect of the meeting. However, being clear about how the career seeker should (at minimum) be involved will ensure he/she is genuinely included and influential in the meeting. Although this should be negotiated with the career seeker in advance, it is suggested that the career seeker (with assistance as needed) takes the following roles:

- a. Introducing him/herself and the personal allies invited to the meeting. (The employment specialist should introduce the others at the meeting, especially if the career seeker has not met them prior to the meeting. Ideally, the career seeker should have met everyone prior to the meeting!)*
- b. Sharing information he/she has put into the Career Planning Workbook.*
- c. Responding to what other people contribute, in terms of whether he/she agrees or disagrees with what is being said or suggested. (The facilitator and employment specialist may have to intentionally ask the career seeker to respond to ideas or comments from others at the meeting.)*
- d. Choosing the three career areas to explore before the next meeting.*
- e. Suggesting a place to hold the next meeting.*

SECOND CAREER PLANNING MEETING

Overview

Who Should Be There?

1. Career seeker
2. The team members the career seeker invited to the first meeting.
3. Employment Specialist
4. Benefits Counselor
5. DVR Counselor
6. Any other resource people invited to join.

Where and When Should the Meeting Be Held?

Someplace the career seeker is comfortable and familiar with. Community places are ideal for changing the atmosphere from service-dominated to egalitarian consumer-centered. The meeting should be held at a time that allows all invited participants to attend. It's critical that the meeting not be scheduled at a time or held in a place where the support people identified by the career seeker cannot attend.

How Long Should the Meeting Typically Last?

No more than 2 hours. This should give adequate time to cover the agenda for the meeting and allow everyone involved to participate fully.

Who Should be the Facilitator?

The person who facilitated the first career planning meeting, assuming the career seeker is happy with this.

Typical Ground Rules

1. Take turns
2. Listen to each other and ask questions to clarify what people are saying.
3. If you usually talk a lot, talk a little bit less. If you usually say very little, talk a little bit more.
4. Be respectful of each other's ideas, points of view, and information.
5. Keep all things in the room unless there is agreement to share something with someone who wasn't at the meeting.
6. If you say you will do something, follow through.
7. Support one another.

(Most of these ideas taken from: "Using Individual-Centered Planning for Self-Directed Services" developed by Allen Shea and Associates.)

The Agenda

1. Re-Cap of Introductions
2. Re-Cap of Brainstormed Career Ideas and action plan developed at last meeting.
3. Sharing of New Information We Agreed We Needed to Find Out.
 - a. Career exploration - the career seeker shares (with assistance as needed) how the exploration of the three top career areas went.
 - b. Career exploration - what did other crew members find out?
4. How is person feeling about identifying initial long-term career goal?
 - Does s/he feel comfortable making a choice about a broad career direction, based on the experience and learning thus far? Things can change, but does the career seeker and team feel comfortable that they can agree on a general career direction to begin with, which is based on the profile of the career seeker and reflects his/her preferences, particularly after the career exploration phase?
 - Is more exploration needed in order for the career seeker and team to feel more comfortable moving forward with identifying an initial career goal? Does the person want to explore first-hand any of the career areas the other team members researched?

If more exploration is needed, consider how to proceed: (1) Go back to profile of person and then review results of brainstorming from first meeting. Brainstorm again if this seems helpful. Then, have the person choose 3 more areas to explore first-hand, possibly areas that crew members researched for this meeting or specific career areas the person already has some information about but wants to explore further before making a final decision about an initial career goal. (2) Create a plan to accomplish the additional career exploration by the next meeting. (3) Skip to step 11. of this outline and complete the meeting. Then return to this outline for the next career planning meeting. Do not move on to the Third Career Planning Meeting outline until the career seeker can complete steps 4. through 10. of this meeting outline.

If the person can make a choice about an initial career goal / direction, continue with process outlined here.

5. Re-Cap of Information from initial Benefits we talked about at last meeting.
Review results of continued benefits analysis.

6. BREAK

7. Create Vision for Ideal Initial Employment Opportunity

ASPECT OF VISION

IDEAL

AVOID

1. Doing what?
 - to ensure it is related to reaching long-term career goal.
2. Days
 - which ones?
3. Hours
 - total per week?
 - pattern?
4. Location
 - general target area?
 - specific employers?
5. Transportation
 - to get to work?
 - to get home from work?
6. Workplace Environment
 - physical
 - social
7. Co-Workers
 - kind of people
 - relationship with career seeker
 - role in terms of natural support
8. Pay & Benefits
 - hourly pay / take home pay
 - vacation?
 - sick time?
 - health insurance?
 - other needed benefits?
9. Other Important Things to Keep in Mind

8. In light of the initial career goal / direction chosen, the nuts & bolts preferences identified, and the results of the benefits analysis, what types of employment (job titles; typical, existing positions) seem to fit with what the career seeker wants? Follow rules of brainstorming...people do individually and then compare lists - see how much agreement there is without consultation. Record all of the suggestions made, and make a note of why people listed each idea. Ask the person to say if s/he really doesn't like one or more of the suggestions made - then strike those off the list.

Then, engage in second brainstorming process, this time of job possibilities that could be carved or created, which are consistent with the initial long-term career goal and as far as possible, the nuts & bolts preferences. (Explain the concepts of Job Creation, Job Carving, and Self-Employment to the team and see if people can come up with tailored positions that probably don't already exist but that would really fit the career seeker and his/her goals/preferences like a glove.) Again, follow rules of brainstorming...people do individually and then compare lists - see how much agreement there is without consultation. Record all of the suggestions made, and make a note of why people listed each idea. Ask the person to say if s/he really doesn't like one or more of the suggestions made - then strike those off the list.

9. Consider all of the possible ideas suggested:

- *Common job titles or typical, existing positions*
- *Created or carved job ideas*
- *Self-employment options*

...determine which ones are most attractive to the career seeker? If too many possibilities are listed, ask person to choose 3 opportunities s/he thinks are her/his top opportunities to be explored before next meeting. If the person finds it hard to choose, consider exploring possibilities that were suggested most often by team members or try to see commonalities between different job opportunities and identify a smaller number of broader areas of work on exploring.

10. Develop a strategy, using suggestions from the group, for how the career seeker will learn about and try-out each of the three possible job opportunities identified in step 9., along with her/his employment specialist. This strategy should be tailored to what would work best for the career seeker. Utilize knowledge and personal connections of all team members in identifying best opportunities for work experience. As part of this work experience, the employment specialist should also conduct the Recipe For Success situation-specific assessments, which would determine what kind of training, support (external and natural), routines, checklists, accommodations, job adaptations/modifications, etc. would be needed to make the person successful in these or similar job situations.

11. Decide if there is anyone else, given the possible goals being explored, that should be invited to the next meeting as a resource person. Decide a date, time and place for next meeting.

Role of Career Seeker in Second Career Planning Meeting

It is vital that the Employment Specialist take the time to help the career seeker prepare for this career planning meeting in advance. The career seeker should feel free and able to participate in every aspect of the meeting. However, being clear about how the career seeker should (at minimum) be involved will ensure he/she is genuinely included and influential in the meeting. Although this should be negotiated with the career seeker in advance, it is suggested that the career seeker (with assistance as needed) takes the following roles:

- a. Welcome everyone back.*
- b. Introducing any new personal allies invited to the meeting. (The employment specialist should introduce any new “others” at the meeting, especially if the career seeker has not met them prior to the meeting. Ideally, the career seeker should have met any new team members prior to the meeting!)*
- c. Sharing information and opinions about how the career exploration process went. Sharing thoughts about a desirable career goal or telling people s/he is not ready to decide about this.*
- d. Responding to what other people contribute, in terms of whether he/she agrees or disagrees with what is being said or suggested. (The facilitator and employment specialist may have to intentionally ask the career seeker to respond to ideas or comments from others at the meeting.)*
- e. Being the first to answer the eight questions in step 7. - developing the vision for an ideal initial employment opportunity.*
- f. Choosing the three initial employment opportunities to explore before the next meeting.*
- g. Suggesting a place to hold the next meeting.*

THIRD CAREER PLANNING MEETING

Overview

Who Should Be There?

1. Career seeker
2. The team members the career seeker invited to the first meeting.
3. Employment Specialist
4. Benefits Counselor
5. DVR Counselor
6. Any other resource people invited to join.

Where and When Should the Meeting Be Held?

Someplace the career seeker is comfortable and familiar with. Community places are ideal for changing the atmosphere from service-dominated to egalitarian consumer-centered. The meeting should be held at a time that allows all invited participants to attend. It's critical that the meeting not be scheduled at a time or held in a place where the support people identified by the career seeker cannot attend.

How Long Should the Meeting Typically Last?

No more than 2 hours. This should give adequate time to cover the agenda for the meeting and allow everyone involved to participate fully.

Who Should be the Facilitator?

The person who facilitated the first career planning meeting, assuming the career seeker is happy with this.

Typical Ground Rules

1. Take turns
2. Listen to each other and ask questions to clarify what people are saying.
3. If you usually talk a lot, talk a little bit less. If you usually say very little, talk a little bit more.
4. Be respectful of each other's ideas, points of view, and information.
5. Keep all things in the room unless there is agreement to share something with someone who wasn't at the meeting.
6. If you say you will do something, follow through.
7. Support one another.

(Most of these ideas taken from: "Using Individual-Centered Planning for Self-Directed Services" developed by Allen Shea and Associates.)

The Agenda

1. Re-Cap of Introductions

2. Re-Cap of Initial Career Goal and Vision for Nuts & Bolts of Ideal Initial Employment Opportunity (one page diagram with nuts & bolts around outside and career goal in center).

3. Re-Cap of existing employment opportunities, as well as job creation, job carving and self-employment possibilities that we identified which seem to fit with what the career seeker wants.

Re-Cap of the three opportunities the career seeker decided he/she wanted to explore, and the action plan that came out of the second meeting.

4. Discuss results of career seeker learning about and trying-out each of the three possible job opportunities identified for exploration at the last meeting. Here from career seeker first, about how each try-out went (what s/he liked and didn't like) and most importantly, whether overall, s/he liked each job or would rather strike it off the list of options. Then hear from the person who accompanied him/her and completed the Recipe For Success tool. Hear about what kind of training, support (external and natural), routines, checklists, accommodations, modifications, etc. which would be needed to make the person successful in each of the job/career opportunities explored (except those that the career seeker opted to strike off the list).

5. Based on the three experiences, ask the career seeker to rank them (except those struck off). Then, facilitate a conversation reflecting on the amount of training, support and modifications that seem to be needed to make the different jobs successful. If people are concerned about the amount of modifications needed, consider related jobs, job carving options, job creation options, or self-employment options, that still preserve whatever it is about the original job choice that made the person prefer it, but that are thought to be less difficult to arrange/create modifications for in order to make the job a success. If people are not concerned, move to step 6.

6. Here from the career seeker about what he/she thinks his/her initial job/employment goals should be, based on what he/she has experienced and learned, as well as the total list of options developed out of step 5. Help the career seeker identify up to 6 initial job/employment opportunities that would be acceptable, in order of preference.

If more job exploration is needed before the career seeker can decide on this ranked list, consider how to proceed: (1) Go back and review results of brainstorming from second meeting. Brainstorm again if this seems helpful. Then, have the person choose 3 more job possibilities to explore first-hand. (2) Create a plan to accomplish the additional job exploration by the next meeting. (3) Decide if there is anyone else, given the possible goals being explored, that should be invited to the next meeting as a resource person. Decide a date, time and place for next meeting. Do not continue with the outline for this meeting. (4) Return to this outline for the next career planning meeting. Do not move on to Step 7. of this outline until the career seeker can identify up to 6 initial job/employment opportunities that would be acceptable, in order of preference.

If the person can identify up to 6 initial job/employment opportunities that would be acceptable, in order of preference, continue with process outlined here.

7. Make a plan to move ahead with achieving the top-ranked job/employment goal. Included in this discussion should be identifying barriers and strategies for overcoming these barriers. Be sure plan identifies who will do what, and what deadlines will be set for each part of the plan. Finish the plan by setting a target date by which it is expected the person will start his/her new employment. If there is time, look at the other job/employment goals that the career seeker selected and make a plan for achieving these.

8. Set date, time and place for the 1st follow-up meeting, about a month after the career seeker is expected to start the new employment. Make it clear to career seeker, and others working on the plan to reach the job goal, that if problems develop, the team can be called together before the next scheduled meeting to help with this. The first follow-up meeting should evaluate the job/employment opportunity, and create a long-range tentative plan for taking additional steps toward the career goal set.

Role of Career Seeker in Third Career Planning Meeting

It is vital that the Employment Specialist take the time to help the career seeker prepare for this career planning meeting in advance. The career seeker should feel free and able to participate in every aspect of the meeting. However, being clear about how the career seeker should (at minimum) be involved will ensure he/she is genuinely included and influential in the meeting. Although this should be negotiated with the career seeker in advance, it is suggested that the career seeker (with assistance as needed) takes the following roles:

- a. *Welcome everyone back.*
- b. *Introducing any new personal allies invited to the meeting. (The employment specialist should introduce any new “others” at the meeting, especially if the career seeker has not met them prior to the meeting. Ideally, the career seeker should have met any new team members prior to the meeting!)*
- c. *Sharing information and opinion about how the job exploration process went.*
- d. *Responding to what other people contribute, in terms of whether he/she agrees or disagrees with what is being said or suggested. (The facilitator and employment specialist may have to intentionally ask the career seeker to respond to ideas or comments from others at the meeting.)*
- e. *Sharing thoughts about desirable initial employment goals or telling people s/he is not ready to decide about this.*
- f. *Participating in setting target date by which it is expected the person will start his/her new employment.*
- g. *Thanking people for being part of his/her career planning team.*

(A treat is a nice thing to have to thank personal allies for giving of their time.)